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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

Remembering Bryn Mawr: Rural Mexican Community Building, Education, and
Resistance in California's Inland Empire, 1880-1950

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

Audrey Marie Maier

December 2021

Thesis Committee:

Dr. Molly McGarry, Chairperson

Dr. Catherine Gudis

Dr. Jennifer Nájera

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2021

The Dissertation of Audrey Marie Maier is approved:

Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

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This work would not have come to fruition without the scholarly, emotional, and monetary support of many individuals. I am so thankful to have had the support of family, community, and educators who continue to inspire my writing.

As I traced the history of Mexican American resistance and community building in Bryn Mawr, California, I was constantly reminded of my family who left Mexico to build the railroad from Texas to California and made their home in Colton, California. Apart from the vibrant stories shared by my grandpa, Oscar Colunga, finding archival sources about my family and other Mexican American families in the Inland Empire was nearly impossible. Partly out of my frustration, I started on this journey to document, archive, and preserve the history of Mexican Americans in the Inland Empire.

This project began because of the support of James Shipp and the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society. Mr. Shipp welcomed me into the society and let me explore Bryn Mawr's history as an intern. His passion and optimism kept me inspired when the going got tough. Mr. Shipp, although "retired," still gives third-grade students from Bryn Mawr Elementary and Mission Elementary local history tours that inspire students to learn more about their community. The society's financial support was crucial in supporting many of my public history events and projects including the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society Digital Archive, various public history fairs, elementary lesson plans, and AV digitization projects.

The continued support of faculty and staff from the University of California, Riverside's History Department has been invaluable. The department provided summer

funding which allowed me to travel far and wide to various archives and support myself all the while. The support of Dr. Catherine Gudis and her work on the Relevancy and History Project with UCR and the California Citrus State Historic Park greatly expanded my knowledge regarding the citrus industry. Dr. Catherine Gudis provided access to scanners, microphones, and possible community leads that were crucial to my research. Further, it was through her classes and projects that I learned how to be a public historian. The project's partnership with the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society has proved fruitful in connecting local history to the larger narrative of California history. Thank you to Dr. Megan Asaka and Dr. Jennifer Tilton who, while not on my committee, provided insightful feedback on my research. My thanks to Dr. Jennifer Nájera who served on my committee both for this dissertation as well as my master's thesis. Finally, thank you to my advisor, Dr. Molly McGarry, who shepherded me through the bureaucratic processes, provided speedy feedback, and always gave me the room to make my own way through the program.

They say writing is a lonely endeavor, but I was extremely fortunate, especially during the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, to have the support of family, friends, and colleagues. I was lucky to be a part of some wonderful writing groups. One group was forged during the UCR Dissertation Intensive hosted by Christina Trujillo and Hillary Jenkins, where I worked with Arielle Manganiello, Blanca Nunez, and Emil Kehlenbach who provided thoughtful and insightful feedback. During lockdown isolation, I also relied on friends outside of the academy such as Patricia Tan and Amelia-Marie Altstadt whose working group and NaNoWriMo support group motivated me to continue my

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dives into the dusty depths of the archives. My deepest thanks to Antonio Vasquez, whose incredible work collecting images and oral histories of Mexican Americans in Redlands with the Casa de Culturas and Inland Mexican Heritage was the foundation of my research. Antonio's community work remains an inspiration and I feel privileged to walk in his footsteps.

Members of the Bryn Mawr community and family members of Rafaela Rey, Fernanda Cruz, and Ruth Davis were the backbone of my research. It was a privilege to hear their stories and listen to their histories, as they were the key sources for this work. Fred Ramos was the first person from Bryn Mawr that I met, with his stories, passion for community, and love of history he is truly the "unofficial Mayor of Bryn Mawr." It is Fred Ramos's knowledge of his town's history that keeps Bryn Mawr alive. I still have much to learn from him. Frank Coyazo and his wife Rosalie have been so welcoming and kind as I pursued my research. They have always made me feel welcome in their home and I will always cherish the conversations we have had in Rafaela Rey's old home. Thank you to Richard Cruz for speaking to me about his mother Fernanda Cruz, and all of the remarkable things she accomplished, and for providing many photos and stories that made their way into this dissertation. Andréa Davis and her father Donald Davis were flexible and eager to share stories about Ruth Davis and the incredible life she lived. Finally, I am indebted to local history keepers and teachers, both alive and gone who continue to preserve the history of their communities.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Remembering Bryn Mawr: Rural Mexican Community Building, Education, and
Resistance in California's Inland Empire, 1880-1950

by

Audrey Marie Maier

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in History
University of California, Riverside, December 2021
Dr. Molly McGarry, Chairperson

At the turn of the twentieth century, white settlers arriving in Inland Southern California's rich valleys attempted to construct a white utopic rural space. However, this vision ignored the realities of a multiracial space and the racialized capitalism of the growing citrus industry. This dissertation seeks to untangle how a racialized rurality was constructed, reconstructed, and contested in the San Bernardino Valley, and particularly, in the small townsite of Bryn Mawr, California. In my analysis of rurality, I trace the shifting racialized landscape in Bryn Mawr with particular attention to Mexican space and the Mexican community. As I trace the region's shifts between the 1880s and 1950s, I tease out multiple strands and acts of Mexican American placemaking occurring in Bryn Mawr, California including community building, homeownership, labor activism, print culture, and school desegregation.

This dissertation is engaged partially in the reconstruction of historical memory in a region which has continually erased and misrepresented the histories of Mexican American families. My project is not only comprised of intensive archival research but represents my robust and ongoing public history projects including oral history creation, local education initiatives, free public history fairs, as well as the creation of community based, post-custodial digital archives, which combat the systematic erasure found in established archives. Together, robust archival research and innovative public history methodologies allow for the reconstruction of a particular racialized landscape and, most importantly, allow us to “Remember Bryn Mawr.”

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INTRODUCTION

On August 16, 1987, one thousand current and former residents of Bryn Mawr, California gathered at Sylvan Park to celebrate and remember life in Bryn Mawr. As a selection of the best Mariachi bands in San Bernardino played in the background, family, friends, and neighbors met both to reminisce and to make new connections under the massive oak trees shading the park. Throughout the festivities, Danny Landeros walked microphone in hand. As a former radio and TV personality, Landeros interviewed many of the residents in Bryn Mawr, asking them to share their historical knowledge and their memories of Bryn Mawr



Figure 1: The “I Remember Bryn Mawr” event in Sylvan Park.
(Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society Digital Archive, Cooke and Yanez collection.)

during their youth. Filming behind the camera was Frank Coyazo. He was getting atmospheric shots of the event, recording interviews with Bryn Mawr elders, such as his grandmother and grandfather, and documenting the many photographs residents brought to share, all of which would become part of the documentary film, *I Remember Bryn Mawr*.¹ As night began to fall, and with the sounds of trumpets and guitars filling the park, residents lined up. Each elder stepped up to the small stage and through the microphone announced their presence, some calling out their name, some shouting over the music, “¡Viva Bryn Mawr!”

In “Remembering Bryn Mawr: Rural Mexican Community Building, Education, and Resistance in California’s Inland Empire, 1880-1950,” I follow the lead of members of the Bryn Mawr neighborhood who have continued to remember Bryn Mawr, keeping the memory of this small townsite and the Mexican community who lived there alive. I argue that while the rural landscape of the many Inland Southern California communities like Bryn Mawr has been overlooked by scholars, they hold the keys to understanding unique patterns of racial formation, community building, and resistance. This dissertation combines historical research with public history praxis. To tell the history of Bryn Mawr, I have worked with various community members to document, preserve, and make accessible photographs, videos, ephemera, and other documentation, which will ensure that Bryn Mawr and the people who lived there continue to be remembered. As a result,

¹ In 2019 I was able, through a collaboration between Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society and the California Revealed project, to digitize the original *I Remember Bryn Mawr* video and master tapes. The tapes are now publicly available on archive.org and calisphere: <https://calisphere.org/institution/363/collections/> Danny Landeros and Frank Coyazo, *I Remember Bryn Mawr*, U-matic Tape, 1987.

this dissertation is not only a record of the Bryn Mawr community's history and influence, locally, regionally, and at the state level, it is also a living public humanities project invested in maintaining digital community archives, online lesson plans, history exhibits, history fairs, and digital preservation, which will live on for years to come.

Where is Bryn Mawr?

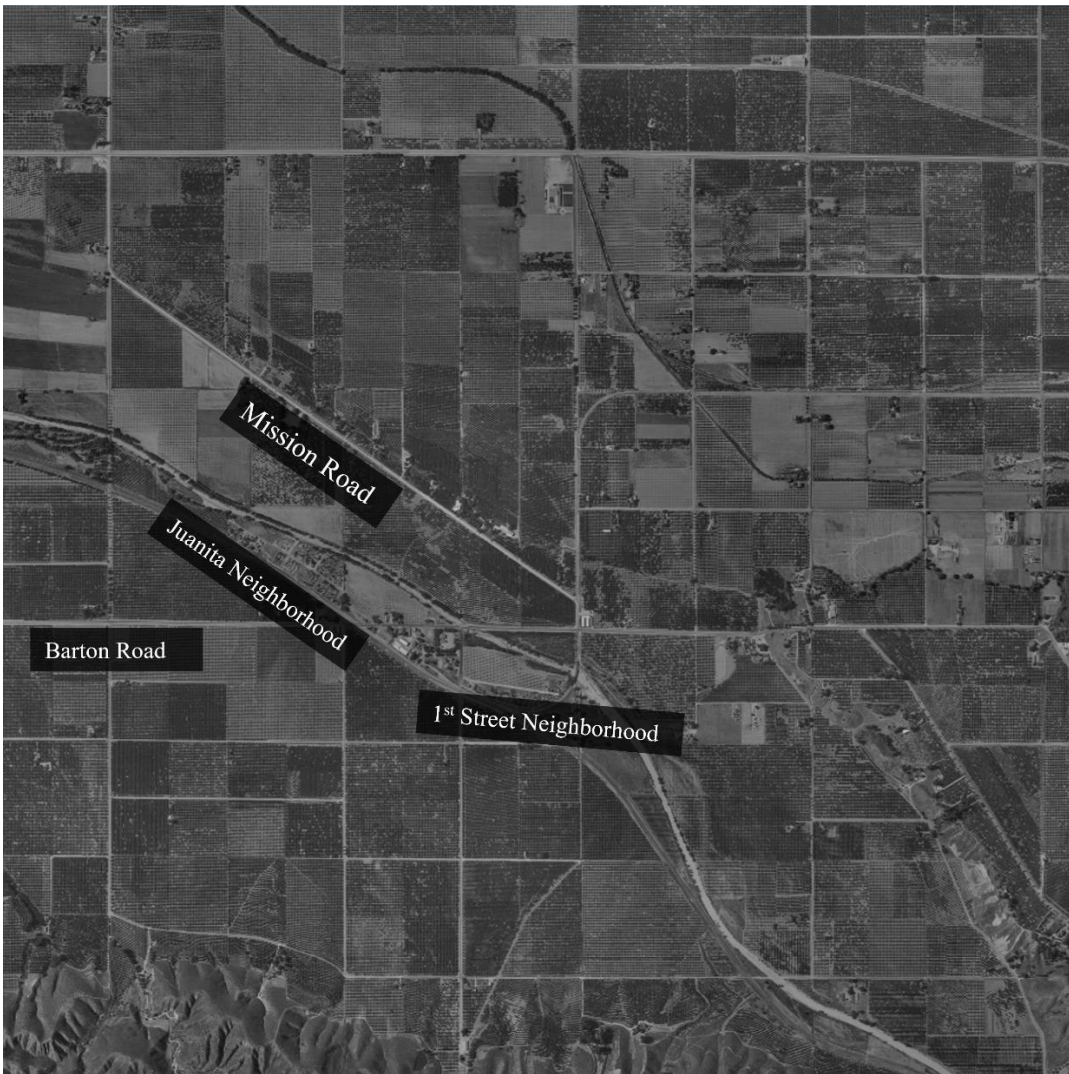


Figure 2: Aerial view of Bryn Mawr taken in 1938 with added street and neighborhood names. (Purchased from Historic Aerials by author, labels added by author)

Bryn Mawr was a small unincorporated townsite making up the majority of the Mission District of San Bernardino County.² Driving Bryn Mawr's 8.26-mile perimeter in February of 1920, you would not have seen any homes or businesses, simply row after row of groves laden with golden oranges. If you turned onto Barton Road you would reach the center of Bryn Mawr and its triangle-shaped "downtown" spanning just a mile and a half from end to end. However, in this small area, you would find four large citrus packinghouses, about 250 white residents - most of whom lived in a row of grove estates on Mission Road, a community of about 270 Mexican Americans living on 1st and Juanita Streets, and nearly 1,500 acres of orange groves.

Bryn Mawr is one of many small citrus communities dotting California's Inland Empire. The term "Inland Empire" serves to separate the area from its coastal siblings of Los Angeles and San Diego and was used as early as 1914 by the city of Riverside's newspaper the *Press Enterprise*.³ The Inland Empire consists of a conglomeration of two counties, San Bernardino County, the largest county in the United States, and Riverside County. The area is anchored by the metropolitan areas of the city of San Bernardino, the city of Riverside, and the city of Ontario. In 1913, playwright John McGroarty, author of the popular *Mission Play* (1911), highlighted the mosaic of spaces that come together to form the Inland Empire region.⁴

² Sometimes the area is referred to in county records as the "Mission Township." Bryn Mawr has had many names throughout its storied past including "Old San Bernardino," "Redlands Junction," and "Cottonwood Row."

³ Rob Leicester Wagner, *Sleeping Giant: An Illustrated History of Southern California's Inland Empire*, First Edition (Las Vegas, NV: Stephens Press LLC, 2010).

⁴ The *Mission Play* was commissioned by the owner of Riverside's Mission Inn, Frank Miller, to promote his hotel and perpetuate the Spanish romanticism that Riverside tourism relied on. As Sepulveda observes, "The *Mission Play* would be a combination of a Christian/Civilization narrative and a history of

The county of San Bernardino may well be likened to an empire; and its various communities to the provinces of an empire. Many an Emperor, indeed, in the days of old – or in these present days, for that matter, -- would have thought himself a mighty potentate had he ruled over an extent of territory that is so rich in soil and mineral and that is coming to be so populous as the county of San Bernardino.⁵

Here McGroarty lays out the close interrelationships between the many different cities, townsites, and hamlets that made up the Inland Empire. Bryn Mawr was a part of San Bernardino County, located south of the city of San Bernardino and in-between Redlands to the east and Loma Linda to the west.

More than a spatial designation, the term “Inland Empire” also speaks to a particular configuration of power and control. From the region’s Spanish colonial past and American imperial interventions, the land and the people living on it have been exploited for capitalist extraction. Bryn Mawr, as we know it now, was first home to the Serrano and Cahuilla people. Serrano and Cahuilla patterns of migration and subsistence agriculture were disrupted by the presence of Spanish missionaries who finally made their way to the San Bernardino Valley in the early 1880s. Traditional local history narratives claim that Father Francisco Dumetz traveled from the San Gabriel Mission to the San Bernardino Valley in 1810. He supposedly made the journey to establish a ranch to aid the San Gabriel Mission.⁶ After naming the valley after Saint Bernardino of Siena, a small ranch outpost or “estancia” was erected. Later the estancia would be moved to a

California’s Missions and the demise of the Indian and Californio.” Charles Anthony Sepulveda, “California’s Mission Projects: The Spanish Imaginary in Riverside and Beyond” (Ph.D., United States -- California, University of California, Riverside, 2016), 281, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1850186032/abstract/F2F7730F32DA4D42PQ/2>.

⁵ John. S McGroarty, “San Bernardino and the National Orange Show,” *The West Coast Magazine*, January 1913, 17, CCC Vii. B 1 folder 8, A.K. Smiley Public Library.

⁶ Many now doubt that the elderly and frail Father Dumetz himself traveled to the valley, but popular lore persists.

nearby hill and rebuilt using adobe brick. A 1930s reconstruction of the building still stands in Redlands today and is visited by school group tours.⁷ After the Mission era and Mexico's independence from Spain, the Lugo family purchased what is now known as the cities of Colton, San Bernardino, Highland, Loma Linda, Redlands, and Yucaipa for approximately \$800.

Spanish conquest represents the beginning of the layers of colonialism and imperialism present in Bryn Mawr. After the Mexican-American War, U.S. imperialism arrived in the area with the settlement of Mormon "pioneers" in 1851, when they purchased the land from the Lugos, who moved back to Los Angeles. Although many Mormons eventually left the valley, families such as the Van Leuven and the Frinks later settled in the area. Soon more homesteaders arrived like the Curtis, Break, and Whittier families. Famously, it has been said that Anson Van Leuven planted the first citrus trees in the area and from then on, Bryn Mawr's fate would be tied to the citrus industry. Bryn Mawr's heyday saw the growth of a robust community surrounding hundreds of acres of citrus groves, a proliferation of packinghouses adjacent to the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks, and a thriving community of Mexican and Mexican Americans, the majority of whom worked in the groves. In the 1980s, much of the area was annexed by the city of Loma Linda, and by 2008 the entirety of what had been Bryn Mawr was absorbed into

⁷ For many years it was believed by Loma Linda and Redlands residents that the estancia was a Mission, however this has proven to be wishful thinking. After the small estancia fell into disrepair, workers in 1938 rebuilt the structure calling it the "Asistencia." Interest in the structure stemmed from the region's fashionable obsession with their own Spanish fantasy heritage.

the city. Today an outspoken community of “old-timers” still call Bryn Mawr home and are dedicated to maintaining the community’s vibrancy by preserving its history.

Race and Place in Bryn Mawr

“Remembering Bryn Mawr: Rural Mexican Community Building, Education, and Resistance in California’s Inland Empire, 1880-1950” tells the stories of the land, people, and industry that created a particular configuration of community and belonging, forged from struggles within a racialized landscape. The study of racialized landscapes is the study of how race and space intersect.⁸ In “Remembering Bryn Mawr,” I explore the

⁸ In the early 2000s a group of scholars including William Deverell, Phoebe S. Kropp, and Dydia DeLyser sought to analyze the mythologized landscape of California. They built on the earlier work of journalist Carey McWilliams and his term “Spanish Fantasy Past” to analyze how the manufactured architecture, marketing materials, and literature sought to erase Native Americans and Mexicans from California’s present and future. I join recent scholars such as Genevieve Carpio (*Collisions at the Crossroads*) to argue for an assessment of the “Anglo Fantasy Past,” (Carpio’s term) which analyzes the process by which white “pioneer” narratives were mythologized. Building on her analysis, I connect regional Inland Empire citrus myths to the national Progressive Era Country Life Movement. My analysis of the National Orange Show and its temporary fantasy architecture illuminates how Progressive Era ideals of “new” and “modern” rurality forged a particular utopian view of whiteness within the citrus industry. The early 2000s also saw growth in critical race scholarship. Scholars such as Natalia Molina and Scott Kurashige extended Omi and Winant’s work *Racial Formation in the United States* to trace processes of racial formation in California. Their analyses centered on relational regional formation particularly between Mexican, Black, and Asian Americans within urban space. Historian Matt García examined Mexican American agency within the citrus belt while providing an intellectual history of individuals and organizations. I attempt to fuse these historiographies, bringing García’s focus on rural space with Molina and Kurashige’s attention to the built environment. William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of Its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Phoebe S. Kropp, *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place* (Univ of California Press, 2006); Dydia DeLyser, *Ramona Memories: Tourism and the Shaping of Southern California* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); Carey McWilliams, Matt S. Meier, and Alma M. García, *North from Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States, 3rd Edition* (Santa Barbara, CA, UNITED STATES: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2016), <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucr/detail.action?docID=4471699>; Genevieve Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads: How Place and Mobility Make Race*, First edition (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2019); Michael Omi, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 1994); Matt García, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucr/detail.action?docID=3039484>; Natalia Molina, *How Race Is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts*, American Crossroads (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of*

crystallization of a particular rural space, which I call the citrus country town. I contend that rural space has its own unique racial formation emerging from the blend of nature with the built environment. The citrus country town is a rural space that sought to bring together the romanticism and fantasy of American pastoralism with modern inventions, technology, and industry located in the cities. This space was configured around the imaginary and industry of citrus agribusiness. Because of the insular nature of citrus country towns, they manifested particular racial formations, barriers, and also avenues of resistance for the local Mexican American community within education, labor, community, and the press. Within the citrus country town, it was one's social status, wealth, residency, and respectability that afforded one access to local institutions. Despite the significant power of white protestant country town elites, the Mexican American community found creative ways to push back against the white dominant class. In this dissertation, I reconstruct the community dynamics of Bryn Mawr and focus on the ways in which members of the Mexican American community creatively adapted to these dynamics to insist upon their place in the citrus country town and their rights as citizens and residents.

At the center of the Mexican Bryn Mawr community, and therefore, one of the centerpieces of this study, is the Bryn Mawr School. The school was created in 1911 to educate the Mexican children living in Bryn Mawr. As such, it is one of the earliest segregated Mexican schools in California. In 1942, when two Mexican women worked

Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles, Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century America (Princeton, N.J. ; Princeton University Press, 2008).

together to close the Bryn Mawr Schoolhouse and integrate the Mission School District, the Bryn Mawr School also became one of the earliest instances of school desegregation in California. Most analyses of Mexican American activism within school segregation focus on the fight against the school as a singular and isolated act of resistance. Much of the secondary source literature on school segregation is focused on analyzing how Americanization curriculum was created, disseminated, and utilized as well as the details of the legal processes by which segregated schools were integrated.⁹ Prior scholars have, for the most part, focused on community activism within schools as a single-issue mobilization. This approach undermines the community's understanding of their place within interlocking oppressive regimes and systems of power. I see the school as intimately connected to, and birthed from, the larger conditions of the racialized landscape of rural Inland Southern California.¹⁰ As a result, I also address how the Mexican community of Bryn Mawr resisted oppression by asserting their autonomy over their labor as well as through home and land ownership, and community building. The Mexican Bryn Mawr community's multifaceted resistance worked to combat larger

⁹ David G. García, *Strategies of Segregation: Race, Residence, and the Struggle for Educational Equality*, American Crossroads ; 47 (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2018); Charles Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed: Segregation and Exclusion in California Schools, 1855-1975* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); Gilbert G. González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 7 (University of North Texas Press, 2013); Guadalupe San Miguel, *Let All of Them Take Heed: Mexican Americans and the Campaign for Educational Equality in Texas, 1910-1981*, First Texas A and M University Press edition (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1987); Valencia, Richard R, *Chicano School Failure and Success: Research and Policy Agendas for the 1990s* (New York: The Falmer Press, 1991); Martha Menchaca and Richard R. Valencia, "Anglo-Saxon Ideologies in the 1920s-1930s: Their Impact on the Segregation of Mexican Students in California," *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (1990): 222-49.

¹⁰ Like Carey McWilliams I choose to capitalize the "Southern" in "Southern California." Carey McWilliams, *Southern California Country: An Island on the Land*, American Folkways (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1946).

structural forces at play including racial capitalism, white supremacy, and social stratification. I follow the interventions made by scholars such as Jennifer Nájera and Laura Pulido who have engaged with interlocking structures of power and oppression in order to take into account gender as well as race.¹¹ Through this analysis, I hope to show that schools can be compelling sites for understanding not just single-issue activism but a range of grassroots activist techniques.

I do not focus on Bryn Mawr because I believe it to be the exception, but because it exemplifies many of the traits and patterns present in other small Southern California communities dominated by agriculture like Highland, Etiwanda, Mentone, Colton, Bloomington, Fontana, Rialto, El Salvador, and more. The Inland Empire is comprised of a mosaic of small communities, what I call citrus country towns, spread out over the region and they have historically been related to each other through familial and business networks. Understanding one citrus country town gives us the insight to understand the region itself and sets the stage for future case studies.

¹¹ Jennifer Nájera, in her case study of La Fiera, traces the larger patterns of segregationist structures at local, state, and federal levels. By using an ethnographic lens, she is able to examine larger structures of segregation at a local level and in so doing observes three “stages” of segregation. Pulido has argued for an assessment of larger systems of oppression claiming that, “They [community activists] build complex movements which simultaneously address issues of identity as well as a wide range of economic issues (production, distribution, and uneven development), thereby defying the various models and paradigms social scientists have created to impose meaning on collective action, in particular, environmentalism.” These range of issues include class struggle, identity politics and a struggle for “dignity.” For her, the context of inequality is first and foremost the struggle that these communities face, yet this inequality is manifested in a myriad of ways. Jennifer R. Nájera, *The Borderlands of Race: Mexican Segregation in a South Texas Town*, First edition (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015); Laura Pulido, *Environmentalism and Economic Justice: Two Chicano Struggles in the Southwest*, Society, Environment, and Place (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996), xiii, xv, xx.

Shifting our Focus East, Towards a History of the Inland Empire

While other scholars have laid important groundwork for discussing the infrastructure of racialized landscapes in California, most of these studies center on urban space. The work of Kevin Starr and, perhaps most importantly, the foundational work of Mike Davis, *City of Quartz*, have inspired more recent scholarship on particular racialized landscapes navigated by Mexican Americans. Within the scholarship of California, and particularly the history of Mexican Americans, there is a large urban and particularly Los Angeles bias. This phenomenon was so great that rural historian David Vaught asked, “Why is There No Rural History of California?” I contend that historians’ selective focus on urban space has led to serious historiographical gaps.¹² As a resident of the Inland Empire with deep family connections to this area, I have always wondered why the counties of Riverside and perhaps even more particularly, San Bernardino have been so neglected in the literature. Los Angeles’s presence has loomed large, a magnetic “imperial metropole” as Jessica M. Kim has recently written, leaving Southern California’s inland region in the shadows.¹³ In my work, I take the unique racial formation of rural space in the region seriously.

¹² David Vaught, “State of the Art: Rural History, or Why Is There No Rural History of California?,” *Agricultural History* 74, no. 4 (2000): 759–74.

¹³ Douglas Monroy, *Rebirth Mexican Los Angeles from the Great Migration to the Great Depression* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*, The Haymarket Series (London ; Verso, 1990); Kevin Starr, *Inventing the Dream California through the Progressive Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); McWilliams, *Southern California Country*; Kevin Starr, *Material Dreams: Southern California through the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Robert M. Fogelson, *The Fragmented Metropolis Los Angeles, 1850-1930*, Classics in Urban History (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); William A. McClung, *Landscapes of Desire: Anglo Mythologies of Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT

The scholarship of Genevieve Carpio and Mark Ocegueda has opened the doors for studies on the Inland Empire region.¹⁴ Their work connecting the Inland Empire to Los Angeles and other regions of Southern California is crucial to expanding the history of the Inland Empire and growing a robust literature on the region. My contribution to the growing research on the area is to focus not on urban connections to Los Angeles and beyond but to analyze the unique methods of rural place-making taking shape in the region. In Wendy Cheng's most recent work on suburbanization in the San Gabriel Valley, *The Changs Next Door to the Díazes*, she argues for scholars to study a process she terms regional racial formation, which brings together larger historical processes with "how they [residents] make sense of race and place in their everyday lives."¹⁵ I use her methodology as a way to honor the lives and experiences of Mexican Americans in the Inland Empire, particularly in Bryn Mawr.

To understand the place and importance of the Inland Empire we need to throw off the conventions we use to understand Los Angeles, and instead formulate new conventions steeped in an analysis of rurality, and particularly how contemporary actors

Press, 1995); Phoebe S. Kropp, *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place*; Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe*; William Deverell, *Water and Los Angeles: A Tale of Three Rivers, 1900-1941* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017); Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race*; Natalia Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939*, *American Crossroads* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Jessica M. Kim, *Imperial Metropolis: Los Angeles, Mexico, and the Borderlands of American Empire, 1865-1941* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019), <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/67412>.

¹⁴ Scholars Juan De Lara and Alfonso Gonzales Toribio have also expanded the literature on more recent labor issues in the Inland Empire. Juan D. De Lara, *Inland Shift: Race, Space, and Capital in Southern California* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2018); Alfonso Gonzales, *Reform Without Justice: Latino Migrant Politics and the Homeland Security State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199973392.001.0001>.

¹⁵ Wendy Cheng, *The Changs next Door to the Díazes Remapping Race in Suburban California* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 10.

categorized and conceptualized rurality. While it is difficult to untangle the suburban sprawl we see today with the area's historically rural nature, up until the 1940s this area was decidedly rural. As an inland valley, up until the 1940s, the area's economy was primarily agriculturally based, separating it from its coastal siblings of Los Angeles and San Diego. In my dissertation, I unpack how local Inland Empire elites borrowed from and adapted aspects of the national Progressive Era Country Life Movement as they sought to create an idyllic landscape promoting cultivated natural beauty, cooperative industry, and white republican mores. While many scholars have followed Carey McWilliams' lead in viewing Southern California as a "World of Its Own" in which landscapes of rurality and urbanity collide, none have taken closer observation of what this meant and symbolized at the time of its creation.¹⁶ Rather than a mere accident or anomaly, the citrus country towns like Bryn Mawr that dotted the Inland Southern California area were part of a carefully cultivated rural cultural landscape, with its own social structure. Once these lenses are applied, we can view the history of the Inland Empire in new ways.

Methodological Approaches: Filling in Archival Gaps through Community Digital Archives

In 2016, when I first began to research the history of my own family and community, all I could find were dead ends and empty files. There is a severe lack of

¹⁶ Carey McWilliams first called Southern California citrus communities a "World of its Own," continuing on to write, "wherever citrus predominates, a rather distinctive social life has long existed... It is neither town nor country, neither rural nor urban. It is a world of its own." Other scholars have remarked on McWilliam's phrasing as well, for instance Matt García used it in his book title *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970*. McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 207.

archival resources related to the Inland Empire's Mexican communities. I was faced with analyzing what Verne Harris has called the archive's "sliver of a sliver" in which only a minuscule fraction of records and history have been preserved by archivists.¹⁷ As a result, I soon realized that I needed to be extremely creative with the sources I had and that the use of public history methodologies such as oral histories and community archives would be crucial for reconstructing the lives of those who had been erased from the archive. I consider this dissertation to be one component of my larger project of engaged public humanities, based in, and co-produced with, the Bryn Mawr community. As a result, the dissertation and my various public projects are mutually constitutive.

In reading existing archival documents, I have attempted to creatively interrogate the "facts" that these sources construct. I read through the bias and look to the peripheries of these documents in order to reconstruct the Mexican American lives in these white sources. My research has utilized a variety of sources from the A.K. Smiley Public Library Heritage Room, the Feldhym Library California Room, San Bernardino County Archives, California State Archives, and the Chaffee College Archives. The A.K. Smiley Public Library has provided a wealth of information about the "world" of white grove owners in Redlands and Bryn Mawr and, in some cases, their relationships to the Mexican laboring communities. In particular, the records of the newspaper the *Redlands Daily Facts* have shed light on local strikes, World War II mobilization, and the lives of grove owners and school administrators. Further, the robust Redlands Chamber of

¹⁷ Verne Harris, "The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory, and Archives in South Africa," *Archival Science* 2, no. 1-2 (March 1, 2002): 65, <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02435631>.

Commerce collection, which includes a substantial number of records related to the support of the citrus industry, including letters, surveys of packinghouse labor, records of production, and even, in a miscellaneous folder, a few records of Mexican American-led strikes and labor grievances. There are existing records that hint at the experiences of Mexican American communities in the region, but they are often underutilized by scholars. These records include the Spanish language newspaper, *El Espectador*, which covered the news in Pomona, Claremont, Ontario, and Rancho Cucamonga. This newspaper has been critical to my research in illustrating that there was a significant grassroots movement building in the 1930s, which pushed Mexican Americans to recognize and seize upon their constitutional rights as American citizens.

Often when I entered archives, what I expected to see was not present. For example, while conducting research on education policy at the UCLA Charles E. Young Research Library and the California State Archives, I was originally dismayed to see such few references to Americanization education policy used in Mexican segregated schools. In fact, there were hardly any direct references to Mexican education. Instead, what I found were copious documents and references to rural education policy. Rather than toss the documents about rural education aside, I became curious. Later I realized that within these discourses on the “rural problem” in education were obvious and veiled references to Americanization policies and Mexican students. This archival peculiarity led me to expand my lens from analyzing outright Americanization and segregationist techniques to focusing on the subtleties of what educators called “foreign” education found in rural education reform. In other words, these documents illuminated how race was rendered

through place. Reading between the lines of rural reform, I discovered educators' assumptions about Mexican students and their education.

Despite my deep archival investigations and creative methods of analysis, the existing historical sources proved insufficient. To tell the story of Bryn Mawr, I needed more sources. As a result, I have worked with the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society, the Relevancy and History Project partnership between the University of California, Riverside (UCR) Public History Program and the California State Parks under Dr. Catherine Gudis, and Inland Mexican Heritage to create new digital community archives.¹⁸ I created the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society digital archive in 2016, generating metadata for existing digital collection items, and collecting additional materials. In 2020, under the direction of Dr. Catherine Gudis, I began to collaborate with UCR's Public History Program and the libraries to create an Omeka-based digital archive for the Relevancy and History Project which makes materials from local organizations like the California Citrus State Historic Park, Inland Mexican Heritage, and the Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society publicly available. These archival resources, which compile over 500 newly available photographs, oral history recordings, letters, ephemera, video materials, and documents begin to combat the archival erasure of Inland Empire Mexican and Mexican American history. The archive of Inland Mexican

¹⁸ I joined the stagnating Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society in 2016. They had not held a meeting or event in over five years. I began as an intern researching a project of my choice, the Bryn Mawr School. In that year I built the society's digital archive and since then have worked with various community members to grow the archive. In 2019, I became the secretary of the organization and have planned events, lesson plans, collaborations with other organizations and an afterschool program. I have worked with the Relevancy and History Project under Dr. Catherine Gudis since its inception in 2016, working during classes and as a graduate research fellow to produce exhibitions, oral histories, interactive activities, research, talks, and art installations related to California's citrus industry.

Heritage is of particular note as its creator Antonio Vasquez compiled a rich array of photographs, oral histories, and documentary videos. The Inland Mexican Heritage collection has been critical in finding the voice of the Mexican community in the archive.¹⁹ We hope these materials will become the basis for new research and robust representation of the history of marginalized populations in the Inland Empire.

As a digital community archivist, I visit and make personal connections with community members, create high-quality digital scans of their materials, receive their permission to share the digital copies within and beyond the archive, create and compile metadata for the items, and input the metadata into a collections management interface, Omeka. As many commentaries on the archival field have acknowledged, the community archive movement is surging forward as a versatile and community-centered archival practice that breaks and readapts traditional archival theory and practice to accommodate diverse needs.²⁰ Andrew Flinn, Mary Stevens, and Elizabeth Shepherd define community

¹⁹ Many of these digital archives fit into what Carpio has termed the “Rebel Archive” or “sources created by those overlooked by mainstream accounts, including family photo albums, school records, popular media, oral histories, and “counter-mapping.” Carpio mentions Inland Mexican Heritage specifically in her article. I count myself among the rebels. Genevieve Carpio, “Tales from the Rebel Archive: History as Subversive Practice at California’s Margins,” *Southern California Quarterly* 102, no. 1 (February 1, 2020): 57, 73, <https://doi.org/10.1525/scq.2020.102.1.57>.

²⁰ Andrew Flinn, “Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges,” *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 28, no. 2 (October 1, 2007): 151–76, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00379810701611936>; Mario H. Ramírez, “The Task of the Latino/a Archivist: On Archiving Identity and Community,” *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies* 5, no. 1 (February 20, 2009), <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5d4366f9>; Anne J. Gilliland, Sue McKemmish, and Andrew J. Lau, *Research in the Archival Multiverse* (Monash University Publishing, 2017), <http://www.oopen.org/search?identifier=628143>; Michelle Caswell, “Seeing Yourself in History: Community Archives and the Fight Against Symbolic Annihilation,” *The Public Historian* 36, no. 4 (2014): 26–37, <https://doi.org/10.1525/tph.2014.36.4.26>; Heather MacNeil and Terry Eastwood, *Currents of Archival Thinking* (Westport, UNITED STATES: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2017), <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucr/detail.action?docID=4776509>; Archiefschool Hva, Rienk Jonker, and Frans Smit, *Archives in Liquid Times*, accessed January 23, 2021, https://www.academia.edu/35423093/Archives_in_Liquid_Times.

archives as: “collections of material gathered primarily by members of a given community and over whose use community members exercise some level of control.”²¹

The key intervention of community archiving is placing marginalized community members as stakeholders in the archival process. Going hand and hand with this movement is a “post-custodial” model of digital archiving that has gained favor in some arenas. Michelle Caswell describes the post-custodial process:

rather than accept physical custody of records, we borrow records from individuals, families, organizations, and academic and government repositories, then digitize them, archivally describe them in a culturally appropriate manner, link them to related materials in the archives, and make them freely accessible online to anyone in the world with an internet connection.²²

This model reverses the traditional conception of an archive as a repository of physical objects, owned by an institution, and kept in a physical space. Neither I nor the organizations I work with, “own” these materials, physically or by copyright. Rather, the archive functions as a distributor or facilitator as opposed to a possessor, making these materials available to anyone with internet access. Individuals no longer need to physically give up possession of their treasured photographs, letters, and documents.

In addition to my work in digital humanities and community-based archives, I am also an oral historian. For this dissertation, I have completed over a dozen oral history interviews, which will soon be available online. Within my oral history practice, I view

²¹ Andrew Flinn, Mary Stevens, and Elizabeth Shepherd, “Whose Memories, Whose Archives? Independent Community Archives, Autonomy and the Mainstream,” *Archival Science* 9, no. 1-2 (2009): 71-86.

²² Michelle Caswell, “Seeing Yourself in History: Community Archives and the Fight Against Symbolic Annihilation,” *The Public Historian* 36, no. 4 (2014): 33, <https://doi.org/10.1525/tph.2014.36.4.26>.

my narrators as my collaborators and as active agents highly invested in the shaping of their and their community's history. By viewing the oral history and its transcript as a personal performance or enactment of historical memory, my focus is first and foremost on the agency and action of these collaborators. This orientation seeks to re-center the individuality and authority of the narrator and directs the scholarly focus on community and memory without losing sight of the human dimension and responsibility that comes with conducting oral histories. This orientation seeks to align oral history with what performance studies scholar Diana Taylor calls the "repertoire." In opposition to the historian's archive, which suspends space and time in a single document, often separated from its context, the "repertoire requires presence: people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by 'being there' being a part of the transmission."²³ The repertoire is itself a means of knowing and a method of transmitting knowledge to an audience. Viewing oral history as part of the repertoire enables a more robust analysis of how individuals embody and perform their historical memory. I recognize my narrators as agents of their own history by investigating their motives, desires, blind spots, and community tensions. In this way, I hope to honor the interviewees' stories not as data or documentation but as individual performance.

My public history practice embodies archival collection as well as public dissemination. Within my praxis, I focus on sharing these newly uncovered resources publicly to ensure diverse stories are told and distributed beyond the academy. Through

²³ Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 20.

my work with the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society, I have planned three community history fairs and collaborated with a fourth-grade elementary school teacher to create interactive digital lesson plans about Bryn Mawr history and an after-school History Detectives Club. These events are venues in which I share my research in a publicly accessible way, but the events are also spaces where community relationships are built and strengthened. As a fellow for the Relevancy and History Project I have collaboratively curated multiple exhibitions documenting the history of citrus in the region. In all of my public history events, I make use of the variety of materials collected through community archives so that the pictures and voices are on display for all to see. For example, in 2019, while working on the *Finding Yourself in the Groves* exhibition in the California Citrus State Historic Park’s visitor center I included a picture of the “I Remember Bryn Mawr” celebration, ensuring that the story of Bryn Mawr was a part of the larger history of citrus in Inland Southern California.²⁴

Chapter Outline

The first chapter explores a particular crystallization of rural life that emerged in the San Bernardino Valley through the citrus country town and its spatial and social organization. Utilizing visual analysis, I illustrate how white boosters sought to imagine and actualize a modern white rural utopia by adopting Progressive Era Country Life

²⁴ Frank Coyazo, who helped create *I Remember Bryn Mawr* remembers seeing the image for the first time: “Well, we went into the gift shop and, you know, I was just looking around and lo and behold, Rose goes, Look, there’s a picture of a mural, a big mural on the side of the wall that says, I remember Bryn Mawr and made me so happy to know that we were part of this beautiful historical landmark here that was made, especially for the citrus industry. So, there it was. ‘I Remember Bryn Mawr.’” Frank Coyazo and Rosalie Coyazo, “I Remember Bryn Mawr II” Interview with Frank Coyazo, interview by Audrey Maier, September 5, 2021.

movement rural reform ideology to fit their own needs. Conceptions of white rural utopia expressed in San Bernardino's citrus country towns focused on cultivating a new spatial zone not quite pastoral or urban industrial. Instead, this zone mixed industrial developments and amenities like electricity, irrigation, and city planning with the fresh air, natural bounty, and verdant vistas of the countryside. The emerging landscape consisted of more than just vistas. Within the developing citrus country towns, a new social system emerged in which a small group of grower elites sought (in vain) to control nearly all aspects of life from entertainment, to schooling, and industry. Through spectacles like the San Bernardino National Orange Show, the fantasy of the citrus country town and its corresponding social system was perpetuated and disseminated. Spectacularized representations of rural industrialization reproduced a fantasy of white rural utopia while ignoring the realities of racial demographics in the San Bernardino Valley.

In chapter 2, I show that grower and booster assertions that the San Bernardino Valley consisted only of white rural communities was a façade masking an entrenched system of racialized capitalism. The country town's survival was dependent on a growing permanent community of nonwhite immigrants comprised of Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican laborers. Using census data and materials from local archives, I reconstruct the shifting demographics of Bryn Mawr, illustrating how the town went from a multi-racial community to a strict white/Mexican binary in the wake of U.S. Asian exclusion acts such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the 1902 Geary Act. Despite anxieties about the presence of Mexicans in citrus country towns, growers sought to maintain their

access to a non-white labor force by allaying white concerns over the community's perceived violence and propensity for disease. To do so, they attempted to bring the community under their partial control in segregated subdivisions and to use policing and the press to illustrate their control over the community. I argue Mexican subdivisions created a contradictory space within the citrus country town. By dividing small portions of their land holdings and then renting and selling this land back to the Mexican community, white growers moved the Mexican community to a central, rather than peripheral, location within the citrus country town. I argue that growers' creation of the Mexican subdivision (Mexican space in white rural space) was meant to aestheticize, sanitize, and reform the community to fit into codes of rural whiteness thereby securing the permanent presence of the Mexican American labor force in the country town.

Chapter 3 interrogates what I call the problem of *foreign rurality* in Southern California education reform efforts. In the 1910s, Progressive reformers were actively involved in reforming aspects of public education including the education of rural students and the education of immigrants. Dubbed the "rural problem" and the "foreign problem" respectively, reformers across the nation attempted to "solve" these problems individually. In this chapter, I argue that due to the particular racialized landscape of Southern California rural space, education professionals perceived rural space to be "foreign" in nature. By mapping race onto rural space, they sought to reform Mexican children who they perceived to be a dual threat to American democracy due to their race and their spatial location. I illustrate how educators' efforts to solve the issue of foreign rurality manifested locally but also worked to expand the growing California educational

bureaucracy as the Progressive state boasted that it could solve both California's foreign and rural problems. The result of state efforts to address foreign rurality was the proliferation of Americanization programs and segregated schools like the Bryn Mawr School.

One particular California citrus grove owner, educator, and bureaucrat, Mission District resident Grace C. Stanley, is the focus of chapter 4. I illustrate how Stanley, as a local grove owner and Progressive education reformer, modeled a particular form of Americanization, which I term *Benevolent Americanization*. Benevolent Americanization was a calculated education policy that utilized the language of female benevolence to allay white concerns over Mexicans' presence in citrus country towns. In this way, Stanley secured her and other growers continued access to Mexican labor. Stanley's philosophy relied on individual education pedagogy and vocational training to argue that Mexican children could be beneficial to white society once they received the appropriate mothering and guidance from white female teachers. Stanley's position as San Bernardino County Superintendent, President of the Southern Section of the California Teachers' Association, California Commissioner of Elementary Education, and the creator of the Cucamonga demonstration school for Mexican education allowed her philosophy to spread throughout California, illustrating how regional philosophies had influence at the state level.

Chapter 5 focuses on local Mexican resistance emerging in the Depression era as Dust Bowl migration put residency and rootedness into high relief. This chapter focuses on how Mexican residents of Bryn Mawr and nearby Redlands claimed space and

mobilized their status as residents to agitate for “local citizenship.” My use of the term “local citizenship” refers to how local conditions like residency, homeownership, labor availability, and community ties shaped and reshaped people’s access to rights, labor, and security within their communities. In so doing, I assess how citizenship and belonging were negotiated by Mexican residents at the local level. By tracing homeownership trends, instances of labor activism, and the emergence of a regional print community forged by local Spanish language newspapers, I illustrate how Mexican Americans mobilized their status as residents and citizens to demand access to the benefits of whiteness and insist upon their belonging within the citrus country town.

While chapter 5 focuses on macro patterns, wherein the Mexican community as a whole demanded access to local citizenship, chapter 6 focuses on the ways in which two women, mother and community advocate, Rafaela Landeros Rey, and elementary school teacher, Fernanda Cruz, mobilized their status as women and mothers to negotiate the contours of Southern California’s racialized landscape. By delving into their life stories and biographies, I illustrate how Rey and Cruz navigated unequal systems of education, labor exploitation, and community suppression in their own lives and successfully leveraged gender conventions across white and Mexican space and communities in Southern California. Rey, as a citrus packer, *mutualista* (mutual association) leader, PTA president, World War II defense worker, and a mother commanded respect in her own community and among the white country town elite. Similarly, Cruz as a voracious reader, high school valedictorian, UCLA graduate, and elementary school teacher was able to traverse segregated space and command levels of professional respect. Cruz and

Rey's ability to operate within both Mexican and white middle-class codes of femininity and motherhood gave them a unique voice and the empowerment, as anthropologist Ruth Tuck states, to "say things to the Anglos our men cannot."²⁵

The final chapter centers on the desegregation and subsequent integration of Bryn Mawr School. I illustrate the heightened context of schooling and child labor emerging in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor's destruction. It was in this context that Rafaela Landeros Rey used her position to confront the Mission School District school board and demand desegregation. While most studies of school desegregation focus on male-driven litigation and on post World War II movements, Bryn Mawr's story of desegregation occurred at the start of the war and was achieved through the election of an anti-segregationist member to the school board. Rather than conclude my study with desegregation I assess the ways in which teacher Fernanda Cruz, acted as a mediator for integration, supporting and advocating for the newly integrated Mexican students. By focusing on a non-litigative desegregation case, I highlight the roles of women in desegregation and integration, which have been largely overlooked in both regional history and the historiography.

Conclusion

This dissertation brings together multiple historiographies, encompassing California mythology, rural history, racial formation, public memory, Progressive education, female benevolence, and Mexican school segregation. I use these nodes to flesh out new trends that only become visible once one critically assesses Inland Empire

²⁵ Ruth D. Tuck, *Not with the Fist, Mexican-Americans in a Southwest City* (Harcourt, New York: Brace and Company, 1946), 150.

citrus country towns as rural “worlds of their own” and listens to the rich histories being told and preserved by the community itself. With this dissertation, I seek to honor the Mexican American community of Bryn Mawr but also to show the complicated ways in which the particular formation of citrus country town rurality influenced the region and the state. Assessing the citrus country town configuration, with Bryn Mawr as a model, brings to light different historical actors, events, and trends, which have hitherto been overlooked. Part of my work is to call for other scholars to assess the unique history of California’s Inland Empire and for public historians to continue preserving the histories of marginalized residents. I predict that these trends, born out from the citrus country town rural configuration, are not unique to Bryn Mawr but will help illuminate the histories of other overlooked rural communities in Inland Southern California.

CHAPTER 1: Fabricating a Rural Utopia:

The Space, Society, and Spectacle in Inland Citrus Country Towns

And it is a sight never to be forgotten, to stand on a shining hill top in the Valley of St. Bernard and look upon the far-flung stretches of the green groves of Hesperus loaded with golden fruit. The groves reach up to the very bosom of the hills; they lie so kindly to the eye on the uplands and in the estuaries of the swinging lomas. They tell a magic story of wealth and happiness. Hidden amid endless orchards are the peaceful homes of a people who are undoubtedly the best bestowed and the most prosperous of any in the world.¹

In overwrought and melodramatic prose John McGroarty, author of *The Mission Play* (1911), heralds the return of the National Orange Show in San Bernardino, California.²

In the January 1913 edition of *West Coast Magazine*, McGroarty lauds the San Bernardino Valley for three things, its natural bounty, its “bestowed” people, and the spectacular beauty created by the confluence of nature and settlement. McGroarty is engaging in blatant and exaggerated boosterism. In so doing, he also paints the picture of a citrus rural utopia, a particular configuration of rurality emerging in San Bernardino’s citrus belt.

This configuration, of space, people, and spectacle is the focus of this chapter. The Inland Empire’s particular configuration of rurality, which I trace here, will lay the groundwork for understanding the emerging racialized landscape in the San Bernardino Valley. Subsequent chapters will utilize the framework I build here to investigate

¹ McGroarty, “San Bernardino and the National Orange Show,” 19.

² The *Mission Play* was commissioned by the owner of Riverside’s Mission Inn, Frank Miller, to promote his hotel and perpetuate the Spanish Romanticism Riverside tourism relied on. As Sepulveda observes, “The *Mission Play* would be a combination of a Christian/Civilization narrative and a history of California’s Missions and the demise of the Indian and Californio.” Sepulveda, “California’s Mission Projects,” 281.

community building, labor activism, and education in the Inland Empire's citrus country towns.

In 2000, David Vaught asked those gathered in Iowa at the Organization of American Historians Midwestern Regional Conference, "Why is There No Rural History in California?"³ In Vaught's (perhaps overly) sympathetic study of Northern California growers, he argues that scholars have not analyzed the "worldview" of farmers (what he called "grower ideology") and instead focused on farmworkers.⁴ However, in the mid-1990s and early 2000s, a group of Southern California scholars had already begun exploring citrus grower ideology, but their work flew in the face of Vaught's sympathetic treatment of growers.⁵ The work of Don Mitchell, H. Vincent Moses, Douglas Sackman,

³ Vaught, "State of the Art."

⁴ "Previous scholars...did not analyze the worldview of farmers (Growers, as they called themselves) with the same rigor and subtlety that they analyzed farmworkers." Here he takes aim at the existing historiography. The historiography of rural California begins with the work of journalist and historian Carey McWilliams. In his 1939 work, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California*, and in his subsequent book, *Ill Fares the Land* (1945), McWilliams sets up what he sees as the primary issue of the increasing industrialization of agriculture during the era: as he states, "the Industrial Revolution has hit the farmer." His primary concern is how this system has disadvantaged farm workers, particularly migrant farmworkers, who were in many ways at the mercy of this system. Following this tradition came the work of historian Devra Weber who aimed to centralize the discussion on the farmworkers themselves. Writing in 1994, she notes that, "Migrant agricultural workers have until recently been largely ignored as active participants in United States history. Most studies have focused on the growth of capitalist agriculture, the related decline of the family farm, and the critical and foreboding implications this held for the Jeffersonian vision of a yeoman farmer-based democracy." Weber centers the agency of migrant farmworkers as they negotiated and resisted against the agribusiness system. In doing so she focuses on the culture of farmworkers and how this shaped their experiences. Vaught, 769; Carey McWilliams, *Ill Fares the Land: Migrants and Migratory Labour in the United States* (London: Faber and Faber, 1945); Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Devra Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold: California Farm Workers, Cotton, and the New Deal* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

⁵ Anthea Marie Hartig, "Citrus Growers and the Construction of the Southern California Landscape, 1880–1940" (Ph.D., United States -- California, University of California, Riverside, 2001), 236, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/304687119/abstract/3B4D45284ADE4266PQ/2>; Douglas Cazaux Sackman, "'By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them': 'Nature Cross Culture Hybridization' and the California Citrus Industry, 1893-1939," *California History* 74, no. 1 (1995): 82–99, <https://doi.org/10.2307/25177472>.

and Anthea Hartig provided excellent analyses of grower culture through an economic lens. They focused extensively on untangling the exploitative cooperative economic system and how citrus cooperatives like Sunkist remade the physical and racial landscape of Southern California.⁶ They illustrate how grower ideology was rooted in capitalist exploitation and white supremacy in which a small group of growers relied on the labor of a large population of non-white workers. Their studies of the citrus cooperatives and growers focus on the larger cities of Riverside and greater Los Angeles and often argue for the urban nature of these citrus centers.

In response, I return to Vaught's framing question ("Why is There No Rural History in California?") but for a different reason. I do not wish to de-center labor nor to uncritically accept the utopian vision of "grower ideology." Instead, I wish to bring back the issue of rurality to the discussion of citrus agribusiness by focusing on small citrus communities in the San Bernardino Valley, particularly Redlands, and especially Bryn Mawr, wherein growers controlled small orchards (under 1,000 acres). These spaces were not urban and instead engaged in a particular form of spatial production which was rooted in national debates about rurality's place in modern industrial society.⁷

⁶ Don Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); H. Vincent Moses, "'The Orange-Grower Is Not a Farmer': G. Harold Powell, Riverside Orchardists, and the Coming of Industrial Agriculture, 1893-1930," *California History* 74, no. 1 (1995): 22-37, <https://doi.org/10.2307/25177467>; Sackman, "By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them"; Doug Sackman, *Orange Empire: California and the Fruits of Eden* (Berkeley, UNITED STATES: University of California Press, 2005), <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucr/detail.action?docID=231920>; Hartig, "Citrus Growers and the Construction of the Southern California Landscape, 1880-1940."

⁷ Small farms were in the majority in California coming into the 1930s but they controlled a much smaller proportion of the land. "By 1929, farms comprising more than 1,000 acres constituted only 3.8 percent of farms in California; but they controlled 63.6 percent of all farmland in the state." Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, 116. As Hartig notes, "A hierarchy of place and status developed among the citrus towns and their inhabitants. Many unincorporated areas such as foothill citrus towns like San Dimas, Alta Loma, Etiwanda, Cucamonga looked and acted more like small

White community builders in the San Bernardino Valley sought to transform the land they now inhabited into a modern white rural utopia and grappled with Progressive Era ideologies like the Country Life Movement in the process. Rather than analyze San Bernardino Valley citrus towns as urban or suburban, I take to heart Carey McWilliam's oft-repeated observation that "wherever citrus predominates, a rather distinctive social life has long existed... It is neither town nor country, neither rural nor urban. It is a world of its own."⁸ McWilliams was looking through the lens of the 1930s and 40s and therefore did not see these spaces as rural, however, at the time of their creation (1880s-1910s) these spaces were coded as the epitome of modern rural life. White settlers worked diligently to transform the San Bernardino Valley into a "world of its own." This construction of citrus belt rurality was comprised of the *citrus country town*, a spatial zone mixing the industrial development of urban areas with rural pastoralism. Within the space was a stratified social hierarchy, or what I term the *country town social system*. Both the spatial and social systems of the citrus country town were perpetuated and disseminated by regional boosters and chambers of commerce through spectacular displays in fairs such as the San Bernardino National Orange Show.

Midwestern farming towns than they did anything Daniel Burnham or Charles Cheney would have recognized as an urban or quasi-urban space. Mid-sized communities such as Redlands, Ontario, and Orange reflected careful planning in their layouts and development. Larger cities like Los Angeles, Pasadena, and Riverside --as we have learned--where the district exchanges were located, acted as the regional hubs and were more urban in nature, design and function." Hartig, 325.

⁸ Other scholars have remarked on McWilliam's phrasing as well, for instance Matt García used it in his book title *A World Of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970*. McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 207.

Modernizing Rurality with Industry

Thus far scholars have not thoroughly unpacked how conceptions of pastoralism and rural-ness were integral to the emergence and subsequent imagining of Southern California's citrus industry. The Country Life Movement was the Progressive Era's response to the growing divide between rural and urban America. Of primary concern was the simultaneous over-crowding of cities and emptying of the countryside. Country Lifers, as proponents of the Country Life Movement, dubbed themselves, understood the primary cause for this demographic shift to be skyrocketing urban industrialization, which led to the under-development of rural spaces. Liberty Hyde Bailey, the father of rural sociology and co-founder of the American Society for Horticultural Science wrote *The Country Life Movement in the United States*, which laid out the key pieces of this Progressive Era ideology. Bailey states that "It is a world-motive to even up society as between country and city; for it is generally understood that country life has not reached as high development within its sphere as city life has reached within its sphere."⁹ The movement came to the consensus that the countryside needed modernization. They believed that modernization would occur once rural space acquired the industrial amenities and technologies found in urban areas like universities, industrial machinery, libraries, transportation networks, social clubs, irrigation, and sewer systems, and more. The modernization or urbanization of rural space would be achieved through rural industrialization. Industrialization was viewed as the key to modernization and Country

⁹ L. H. (Liberty Hyde) Bailey, *The Country-Life Movement in the United States* (New York, The Macmillan company, 1911), <http://archive.org/details/countrylifemove00bailrich>.

Lifers aimed to infuse rural space with industry and technology to re-shape rural space. Rurality was to be transformed into something new, a modern American rurality melding the promise of pastoral and industrial life.

San Bernardino Valley boosters and elites borrowed from and adapted Country Life Movement ideology for their own purposes. For Country Lifers, modern rurality would include irrigation projects, land reclamation, the repopulation of farms, and innovations in rural education. While Bailey and other Country Life thinkers posited theories on how the countryside should be industrialized, it was up to elites in Southern California to manifest the modern rural ideal in their own way. One innovation was in the agricultural business structure. As Anthea Hartig and Vince Moses have shown, some of the economic leaders of the citrus industry such as G. Harold Powell, the head of Sunkist, were heavily invested in the Country Life Movement.¹⁰ Moses, in particular, illustrates how citrus agribusiness's "corporate reconstruction of their industry" was based on Bailey's Country Life ideology.¹¹ The farm became a corporation, but it also became the new laboratory, and California agriculturalists became the new innovators. Spurred on by the popularity of eugenics, crop breeding blossomed. As Country Life writer George Walter Fiske wrote, "Burbank has out-Edisoned Edison! He and other experimenters in the scientific breeding of plants and animals have increased the efficiency of every live

¹⁰ Both Hartig and Moses indicate that Sunkist head Powell "was trained at Cornell under Liberty Hyde Bailey, the country's greatest horticulturalist." Hartig, "Citrus Growers and the Construction of the Southern California Landscape, 1880–1940," 104; Moses, "The Orange-Grower Is Not a Farmer."

¹¹ "By wedding the citrus enterprise with Liberty Hyde Bailey's Country Life ideology, and his own Society of Friends cooperative theology, Powell gave the orange growers of Southern California a systematic rationale for the corporate reconstruction of their industry." Moses, "The Orange-Grower Is Not a Farmer," 120–21.

farmer in the land and have added perhaps a billion dollars a year to the nation's wealth."¹² According to Fiske, the horticulturalist had become the inventor and contributor to the economic prosperity of the nation, outdoing even the most famous inventor of urban amenities, Edison. However, the Country Life Movement was more than an economic or business revolution, it reordered space, imagery, as well as social interactions.

At its core, the desire for rural industrialization can be understood as a desire to create a particular landscape. In this dissertation I use Don Mitchell's definition of landscape, "Landscape is thus best understood as a kind of produced, lived, and represented space constructed out of the struggles, compromises and temporary settled relations of competing and cooperating social actors."¹³ This chapter unpacks how small citrus communities in Southern California attempted to create a rural landscape that fused the industrial and the pastoral. I have understood this desired landscape to have three constituent parts: space (a physical environment which mixes rural and urban/industrial life called the citrus country town), social system (a system in which an insular group of local elites sought to control all aspects of life, which I call the country town social system), and spectacle (the idealized capitalist display that sold the image of a modern white rural utopia). This chapter will lay out all three aspects of the Inland Empire's attempts at creating rural industrialization starting first with space.

¹² George Walter Fiske and Young Men's Christian Associations of North America, *The Challenge of the Country; a Study of Country Life Opportunity* (New York etc.: Association Press, 1913), 92, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008977128>.

¹³ Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, 30.

Space: Bryn Mawr, A Small Country Town

When white settlers in the San Bernardino Valley sought to configure the land to meet their needs they relied on long-held assumptions about ideal American pastoralism. The great drama of American mythical pastoralism, as so eloquently laid out by Leo Marx in *The Machine in the Garden*, was actively revived by the Country Life Movement in which ideals of the “middle landscape” were melded with Progressive Era managerial style. Marx demonstrates that American pastoral ideas since the time of Jefferson, meshed nature with the machine, a “middle landscape” between nature and industry. Marx explains that “widely accepted ethical doctrine that the “middle state” was the best of all possible human conditions. According to this venerable idea, man is the creature who occupies the middle link in the “great chain of being,” the point of transition between the lower and higher, animal and intellectual forms of being...It is a moral position perfectly represented by the image of a rural order, neither wild nor urban, as the setting of man’s best hope.”¹⁴ Creating the space which would be the seat of modern rurality was contingent on bringing industry to nature, to create a new rural landscape with the benefits of American modernity, industrialization, and development without the “problems” of urban areas such as overcrowding, sanitation, and crime.

Country Life reformers conceptualized a new spatial zone, the “country town,” “a new form of rural community combining the advantages of both City and Country.”¹⁵ For

¹⁴ Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (Cary, UNITED STATES: Oxford University Press USA - OSO, 2000), 63, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucr/detail.action?docID=431100>.

¹⁵ David Reynolds summarizing the ideas of Country Lifers. David R. Reynolds, *There Goes the Neighborhood Rural School Consolidation at the Grass Roots in Early Twentieth-Century Iowa* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1999), 4.

reformers, modern rural country towns would preserve the pastoral beauty and open spaces of rural life but include technology and amenities like electricity, irrigation, community centers, and social clubs to make rural living more comfortable. From the late 1880s into the 1910s, California became an ideal laboratory for the creation of country towns.¹⁶ Because California was “new” American territory, as white Americans gained control of California, they could begin creating the Progressive Era country town’s ideal blend of urban/industrial amenities in rural spaces from the ground up. Southern California was particularly successful in implementing the country town ideal, leading McWilliams to refer to Southern California as paradoxically “rurban.”¹⁷ In the 1930s Carey McWilliams stated that “In effect, Southern California constitutes a single metropolitan district which should be characterized as rurban: neither city nor country but everywhere a mixture of both.”¹⁸ The existence of a space comprised of a “mixture of both” rural and urban in such a way that the landscape becomes an entirely new category epitomizes the goal of the Country Life Movement.¹⁹ Southern California landscape achieved the complete integration of the rural and the urban, creating a new modern

¹⁶ As Moses notes Southern California became an economic model. “The orange growers of Southern California emerged simultaneously with this [Country Life] movement and became the chief model for what it might accomplish in the realm of agricultural marketing. ” Moses, “The Orange-Grower Is Not a Farmer,” 128.

¹⁷ McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 13.

¹⁸ McWilliams, 13.

¹⁹ As Bailey states “Mankind has not yet worked out its organic relation of town and country. City and country are gradually coming together fraternally, but this is due more to acquaintanceship than to any underlying cooperation between them as equal forces in society. Until such an organic relationship exists, civilization cannot be perfected or sustained, however high it may rise in its various parts.” Bailey, *The Country-Life Movement in the United States*, 20-21.

American rurality, the country town, which blended the pastoral and industrial in a new modern configuration.

Central to the Country Life Movement was transforming rural space into modern space, but in the context of the American Southwest, this modernization had imperial overtones. The bringing of industrialization and modernity corresponded with the expulsion of those who did not fit into American imperial conceptions of modernity. Country Lifers saw themselves as industrious American transformers of empty and unproductive land (and people) into productive American society. The land of course was not empty. Various Native American tribes including the Cahuilla, Gabrielino-Tongva, Luiseño, Serrano, Chemehuevi, and Cupeño peoples called the land home. Further, the land had been occupied by Spain, then Mexico until the culmination of the Mexican-American War in 1848. As historian Genevieve Carpio notes in her study of mobility in the Inland Empire, growers were participants in the American imperial project, “Their positioning of citrus as emblematic of the region reflects the ways Riverside’s residents sought to transform inland Southern California from a peripheral Mexican ranch economy to a center of capital-intensive U.S. agriculture.”²⁰ Citrus agribusiness was a central part of imperial land transformation in which “backward” agricultural practices like ranching and subsistence agriculture was subsumed by modernity and industry. Citrus industrialists were, therefore, transformers not simply of U.S. rurality but bearers of “civilization” to U.S. imperial subjects.

²⁰ Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*, 23.

In San Bernardino's section of the "citrus belt," what Carey McWilliams called a band of land stretching from Pasadena through the San Bernardino Valley and Riverside that contained the ideal conditions for maintaining prolific citrus groves, the country town concept manifested in particular ways, a crystallization I call the citrus country town.²¹ This crystallization focused on acres of cultivated citrus land, the amenities needed to support industrial agriculture, and the image of genteel rural life for growers. The small township of Bryn Mawr, California is a prime example of an early citrus country town. Assessing the history of Bryn Mawr can offer a glimpse into the various ways in which national Progressivist ideas coalesced at the local level, building off of existing colonial landscapes and etching additional racial lines onto the land.

During the 1870s and 1880s land speculation began to boom and townsites appeared across the land. California historian Carey McWilliams describes the increased development of the region; "these beginnings were made possible by the ill-fated boom of the 'seventies. For the boom had brought new wealth, new energy, and a new type of settler to the region."²² These new settlers were the agribusinessmen who sought to reap the "agricultural promise of the region" and transform the land into profits.²³ In Bryn

²¹ For more on the "citrus belt" see Carey McWilliams, *Southern California Country: An Island on the Land*, American Folkways (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1946); Matt García, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 2002); and Gilbert G. González, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-1950*, Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Centennial Series (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994). These studies focus on the greater Los Angeles Area, Orange County, and to a small extent, Riverside. Although García occasionally looks at developments in the San Bernardino Valley, he stops at Ontario rather than continue east. The easterly part of the citrus belt has not received as much attention as the aforementioned counties and regions.

²² McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 117.

²³ McWilliams, 117.

Mawr and other pockets of the San Bernardino Valley, these new settlers would attempt to turn what they perceived to be barren land into a citrus country town with all the trappings of modern industry.

Out of the development frenzy of the 1880s emerged the Bryn Mawr development tract. Bryn Mawr was one of the sixty new towns laid out in Southern California between January 1, 1887, and July 1889.²⁴ The nearby town of Redlands was another early example of this boom and its status as an established city served as a magnet for enticing others to buy up nearby land to sell as townsite developments. Bryn Mawr, however, remained unincorporated throughout its history.²⁵ The name “Bryn Mawr” came from an 1888 development tract owned by a land prospector duo Drew and Crawford, and although this business venture failed due to the property bubble of the 1880s the area would continue to be associated with that name. While it is unclear why they chose the name Bryn Mawr, which means “big hill” in Welsh, the name called to mind the Anglo heritage of the Eastern United States, by recalling Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. The name served two purposes, remapping indigenous land as white space, and signaling familiarity to the type of wealthy East Coast investors Drew and Crawford sought to attract (they

²⁴ McWilliams, 120.

²⁵ Unincorporated areas are not governed by its own local municipal corporation. As a result, Bryn Mawr was administered by San Bernardino County. For Bryn Mawr, this meant that without elected mayor or other local municipal representatives, local citrus elites could essentially run the townsite unofficially. Without local municipal government sections of Bryn Mawr, particularly the sections designated as Mexican space were not provided with the basic infrastructure seen in cities, such as paved roads, sewars, or drainage. Both of Bryn Mawr’s neighbors, Loma Linda and Redlands made various attempts to annex or absorb Bryn Mawr into their cities. Loma Linda began annexing parts of Bryn Mawr in the 1970s and Bryn Mawr was fully annexed in the late 2000s. Many small country towns were unincorporated, including Highland, Mentone, Etiwanda, and El Salvador.

themselves being of that class). Drew and Crawford owned the space, they had the name, now they needed to sell the image of Bryn Mawr, as an idyllic citrus country town.

The tract model was a means by which developers sought to create the citrus country town space. Drew and Crawford's orderly development plan cut the land into a series of 45 nearly identical 5.3 acre lots.²⁶ Promotional images in marketing materials advertise the image of the ideal citrus country town. As with many other California

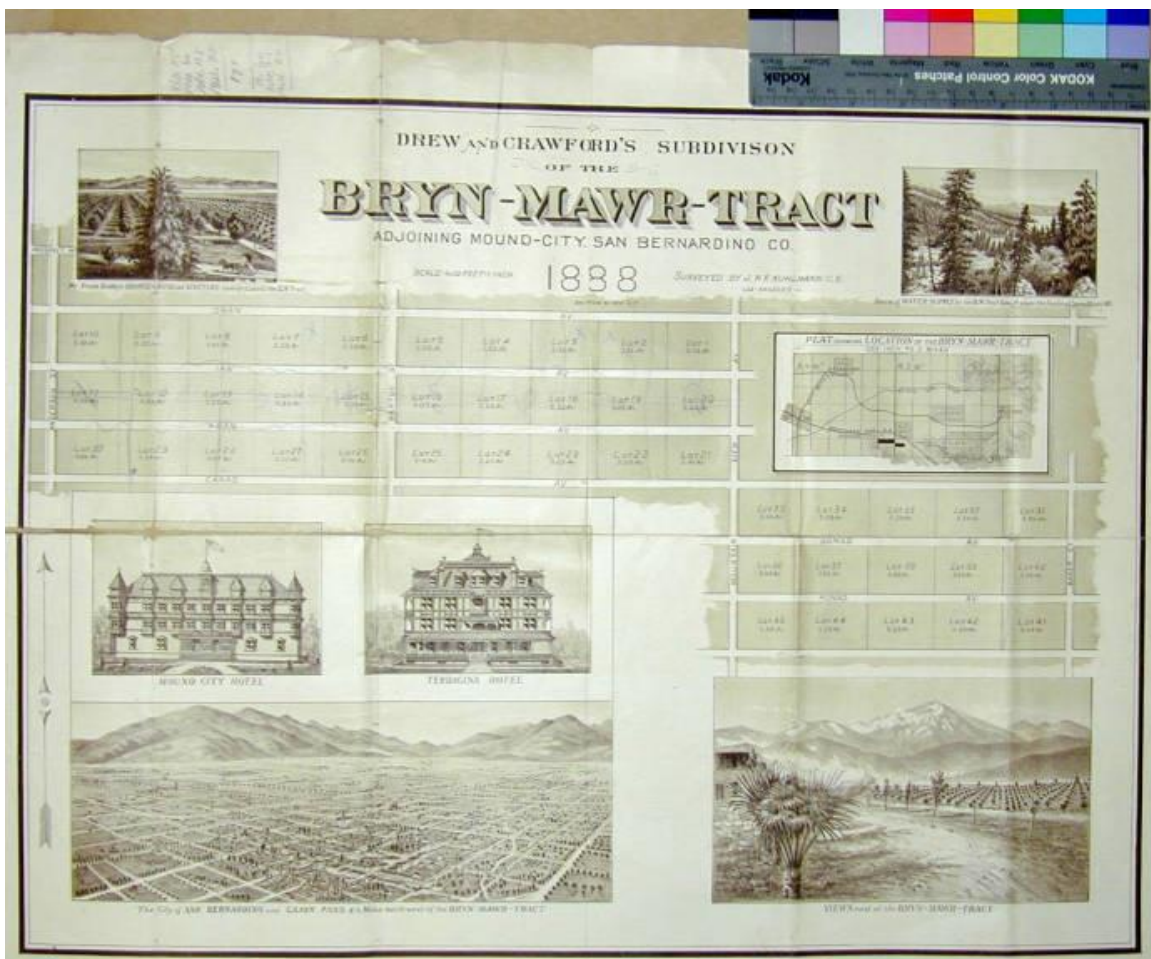


Figure 3: Drew and Crawford's subdivision of the Bryn-Mawr-Tract, 1888. Created by J.P.F. Kuhlmann. (The Huntington Library Digital Collection)

²⁶ J. P. F. Kuhlmann, *Drew and Crawford's Subdivision of the Bryn-Mawr-Tract Adjoining Mound City, San Bernardino Co.*, 1888, [1:4,800], 1888, The Huntington Digital Library, <https://hdl.huntington.org/digital/collection/p15150coll4/id/3500/rec/1>.

booster advertising materials, this poster inflated reality presenting a misleading, if not false, depiction of the tract.²⁷ One key aspect is that the land is advertised as already developed, as an image of a successful orange grove is shown in the upper left-hand corner. In the bottom right is an image described simply as the natural “views of Bryn Mawr,” which include not just the natural land and majestic peak, but the background includes the image of tasteful development and economic opportunity, an orchard. Bookending these images of the seeming “natural” and rural state of the tract are industrial anchors that connote human development. The first drawing depicts the City of San Bernardino, which the brochure inflates through an aerial image, shown to be much larger and more developed than in reality. Due to this bird’s-eye perspective, the gridded streets and avenues lined by trees create the image of an orderly developed community. This is augmented by the artistic renderings of the Terracina and Mound City hotels, which are used to convey the sort of luxury building found in the area.²⁸ Hotels also served to perpetuate boosterism and represented places one could vacation in order to escape the ills of crowded city life.

The tract advertisement is careful to show the work of development, of the existence of rural industrialization, but it does not show the labor it took to create this landscape. As Don Mitchell argues, “*Only* by seeing California purely as a landscape view can we see beauty without understanding the lives of the damned [referring to

²⁷ For more on California Boosterism see: Starr, *Inventing the Dream California through the Progressive Era*; Starr, *Material Dreams*; McWilliams, *Southern California Country*; McClung, *Landscapes of Desire*.

²⁸ The Mound City hotel would shut down shortly after the Bryn Mawr tract failed in 1900. Another resort, this time branded as a health resort, failed in 1904.

agricultural laborers] who are an integral part of that beauty. And that move, erasing the traces of work and struggle, is precisely what landscape imagery is all about" [italics original].²⁹ In Drew and Crawford's tract map they present the land not as a blank canvas, but as a carefully prepared and primed one. It is an open landscape filled with the amenities, culture, and modern technology needed for a citrus country town to blossom in the desert. Drew and Crawford were selling the image of Bryn Mawr, an ideal citrus country town, a place in which rich white investors could imagine themselves occupying.

Although the townsite created by Drew and Crawford was not fully settled, a few years later people began to settle farther east on the border of Redlands. Redlands had been officially incorporated in 1888 and was the most centralized and industrialized center in the vicinity. Redlands's prosperity brought others to the area, and some began to settle in the Bryn Mawr region. These new developers began to take advantage of Bryn Mawr's profitable location. The Southern Pacific Railroad had reached the nearby town of Colton in 1874, and in 1892 the Southern Pacific Railroad built the Redlands Junction Station in Bryn Mawr and completed the track into downtown Redlands.³⁰ This connected Bryn Mawr with neighboring towns including Colton and San Bernardino. This transportation network allowed people and products to be transported with ease.

Geographically, the slightly elevated "Bryn Mawr Bench," which sat on the foothills was an ideal location for orange groves. As García notes, "Studies conducted at the University of California's Citrus Experiment Station established in Riverside in 1913

²⁹ Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, 20.

³⁰ Tom Atchley, "Mission School: A History," *San Bernardino County Museum Association Quarterly* 57, no. 1 (2012): 42.

revealed that the proximity of farms to mountains and foothills determined the type and quality of citrus."³¹ The “bench” was essentially a shelf that kept the groves slightly more elevated than the valley below, which prevented the cold and frost from settling on cold winter days. The land also lays along the San Timoteo Creek, and the nearby Zanja irrigation channel supplied growers with an abundance of water for their groves. With the establishment of the Redlands Junction station, the small townsite was associated with the established citrus powerhouse of Redlands.³² Bryn Mawr became one of many towns that made up the Inland Empire citrus belt.

With the railroad station secured, more people began to slowly settle in the area and referred to the area as both Bryn Mawr and Redlands Junction. On February 9, 1895, an article in the Redlands area paper, *The Citrograph* read: “The locality of the junction is taking on the appearance of quite a village. Several houses have been erected, a considerable acreage planted to fruits, and the place is hereafter to be designated by the euphonious name of Bryn Mawr, with William J. Lawrence as postmaster.”³³ As with many other rural areas across the U.S., the creation of the post office served as a link to the state as well as to the nation, connecting rural to urban. Connections like these prevented a sense of rural isolation. Further, this *Citrograph* article speaks to larger Country Life ideals, the vast improvement of the land both through the creation of homes as well as the planting of fruits, linking the area to the flourishing California fruit

³¹ García, *A World of Its Own*, 26.

³² Early references in newspapers refer to the area interchangeably as Bryn Mawr and Redlands Junction. Later the name of the station was officially changed, locals insist it was because Redlands did not want to be associated with this area with its predominantly Mexican residents.

³³ *The Citrograph*, February 9, 1895

industry. With access to transportation, land, and some of the necessary amenities, Bryn Mawr blossomed into a successful citrus country town.

Bryn Mawr was not simply an isolated citrus country town, growers from various towns were connected through regional ties. Locally, citrus country towns were connected to centralized powerhouses like Redlands, Riverside, Ontario, and San Bernardino, which exerted their influence on the smaller towns. Often these large country towns held additional resources like rail lines, packinghouses, and farm supplies, and importantly name recognition, which was desperately needed by smaller growers. Even from the start of Bryn Mawr as a citrus country town, Drew and Crawford made a point to illustrate the areas connected to Bryn Mawr via the railway. On their promotional materials, they laid out Bryn Mawr's proximity to Colton, San Bernardino, Lugonia, Redlands, and Mentone. This served, of course, to entice buyers, but also to reflect the direct community links created via the railroad lines and the citrus industry.

In this early period, many of the country towns competed with one another, each vying to show clear instances of progress and industriousness. This competition was fueled by the local newspaper. In 1926 *The San Bernardino County Sun* stated that "Ontario vies with Redlands for second honors among San Bernardino County cities."³⁴ What *The San Bernardino County Sun* presents is an inherent competition between country towns as they vie to surpass each other in the pursuit of the ideal of "progress." In the images shown by the *Sun*, progress is represented by the creation of neoclassical style civic buildings, like schools, and agricultural spaces, like nurseries and

³⁴ "Progress Is Shown by West End City," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, February 21, 1926.

packinghouses. Progress in this context meant the attempts to create and manifest modern institutions such as banks, high schools, and churches which were sought after by Country-Lifers. The presence of these amenities displayed the idyllic mix of industry, agriculture, and white, Protestant society. Part and parcel to this objective were creating monuments to a white Western European past through “classical” architecture, as a means to erase the foreign past of Native Americans, Spanish settlers, and Mexicans. This process of competition and one-upmanship fueled the growth and promotion of these towns.

The Country Town Social System in Bryn Mawr

In the Inland Empire, the emergence of citrus country towns coincided with the development of a social system. In the theorizations of Country Life Movement proponents, creating the conditions for the country town began with creating a new and “better” class of people who would transform the landscape. Country-Lifers employed the language of eugenics to express fears that as rural populations moved to the cities the “best” had moved while the “weak” stayed put.³⁵ As Bailey states, the issue with the decline of the rural population is not simply the number of rural residents,

The real problem before the American people is how to make the county population most effective, not how to increase this population. The sorting of our people has not yet

³⁵ As Leo Marx demonstrates, anxieties and concerns about the state of American Rurality have deep roots. Progressive Era fears match almost exactly what Ralph Waldo Emerson expressed in the 1840s “Cities, he tells the audience of Bostonians, drain the country of the flower of youth, the best part of the population, and leave the countryside (in the absence of a landed aristocracy) to be cultivated by an inferior, irresponsible class. He therefore would arrest the growth of cities, and he urges support of “whatever events,” as he puts it, “shall go to disgust men with cities and infuse into them the passion for country life and country pleasures...” One such desirable “event,” strangely enough, is the development of machine power. Like Thomas Jefferson, Emerson is confident that under native conditions science and technology can be made to serve a rural ideal.” Marx, *The Machine in the Garden*, 134.

reached its limit of approximate stability. Many persons who live on the land really are not farmers, but are the remainders of the rural phase of society.³⁶ Bailey makes a clear distinction between those who lived and worked in the older phase of rural society and modern farmers. He argues that those people who are motivated to use new farming techniques should take over rural society.³⁷ From this assessment grew a conception of a new group of agricultural elites who would bring together agriculture and industry to save American rural life. Country Life Movement leaders like Wilbert Anderson proposed a “new industrial order” in American agriculture.³⁸ He was a proponent for the creation of a wealthy farmer elite who were well educated and served as the paternal leaders of their communities. These individuals would be the leaders at the top of the country town social system, investing their wealth and success into the creation of the country town.

Modeled off Anderson and Bailey’s ideology, citrus growers consolidated power through the creation of what I term the *country town social system*, a structure in which political, racial, and economic power was consolidated within a small circle of interrelated rural wealthy, and white, elite citrus growing families. This elite class

³⁶ Bailey, *The Country-Life Movement in the United States*, 34.

³⁷ Later on these notions would be adapted with a eugenics bent, particularly through the work of O.F. Cook who argued in 1916 that “If the time has really come for the consideration of practical eugenic measures, here is a place to begin, a subject worthy of the most careful study – how to rearrange our social and economic system so that more of the superior members of our race will stay on the land and raise families, instead of moving to the cities and remaining unmarried or childless, or allowing their children to grow up in unfavorable urban environments that men deterioration and extinction.” For more on Cook see Chapter 1 in Matt García, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Univ of North Carolina Press, 2001), 34, https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=mOJ46fWrkYgC&oi=fnd&pg=PR10&dq=matt+García&ots=adMpfVnMx9&sig=5CpinV_lFsJc6DE249msVCT3xz0.

³⁸ This agricultural movement crystalized with the Progressive understanding of the urban worker. For more on how black laboring body was reconfigured in this era see Paul R. D. Lawrie, *Forging a Laboring Race: The African American Worker in the Progressive Imagination* (New York: NYU Press, 2016).

recalled the southern plantation labor structure adapted to the Southwest, in which a small landed class's wealth relied on the continued exploitation of a non-white workforce.³⁹ Many of these elites had not previously been involved in agriculture, many were wealthy Easterners who moved to California for health and business. They envisioned themselves as being the "better class" of persons poised to save rural spaces and viewed themselves not as common laborers or farmers but as intellectual and business leaders. H. Vincent Moses, in particular, teases out the ways the position of "growers" was differentiated from "farmers" in that the grower became the wealthy manager of land and other people's labor. The business of growing was constructed as intellectual rather than physical labor.⁴⁰

It was understood that rural space should be run by elite leaders. Being part of the elite necessitated particular racial, class, and social membership. This meant that within the country town social system, "the country town was to be a non-ethnic, Protestant place,"⁴¹ a space based on exclusion. As Vaught says of these growers, "Their horticultural ideal was not only to advance themselves materially but also to promote economic and social progress in their communities and throughout the state."⁴² Part and

³⁹ This formation often created complicated racial and class formations "The quintessentially southern image of blacks and poor whites on sharecropper farms was yielding to a hybrid southwestern culture in which Mexicans transgressed the racialized boundaries between farm worker, sharecropper, and share tenant and forged new identities in the racially charged borderlands between whiteness and blackness." For more on this structure in Texas see Neil Foley, *The White Scourge Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture*, American Crossroads ; 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 5.

⁴⁰ Moses, "The Orange-Grower Is Not a Farmer."

⁴¹ Reynolds, *There Goes the Neighborhood Rural School Consolidation at the Grass Roots in Early Twentieth-Century Iowa*, 44.

⁴² David Vaught, *Cultivating California: Growers, Specialty Crops, and Labor, 1875-1920*, Revisiting Rural America (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 14.

parcel to maintaining one's position in the country town social system was active participation in the political, social, and cultural activities of the citrus country town. Consequently, what emerges is a small group of persons and families who consolidated social and political capital by acquiring the majority of landholdings and local businesses and holding elected and bureaucratic positions. For those who were members, the country town social system created a connected community, for those on its periphery, particularly laborers of color, it limited access and reinforced invisibility. The country town social system dictated who could be wealthy, who could participate, who could be seen, and who could be celebrated. This revamped rural dream was based on class, religious, and racial exclusions, which supplanted the "rugged individualism" of rural life with cooperation and organization amongst a carefully selected group of ruling elites.⁴³ The country town social system promoted a vision of modernity, development, and scientific progress harnessed by white agricultural and community leaders in a beautiful pastoral package.

In Bryn Mawr, the country town social system formed around a few central white families. The families who were able to settle in Redlands and Bryn Mawr came to the land with money in their pockets and, ideally, a strict moral and religious ethos. Archival correspondence from the Redlands Chamber of Commerce to potential grove owners between 1907-1915 indicates who was singled out as "having the best chances" making it

⁴³ In Moses's discussion on citrus cooperatives, he notes that the new corporate capitalism took hold in Southern California. He indicates that citrus growers were "more at home with cooperation and organization than with the rugged individualism of traditional Jeffersonian yeoman." Moses, "The Orange-Grower Is Not a Farmer," 24.

out west. This letter collection includes hundreds of letters sent from prospective citrus investors, ranging from men and women hoping to scrape together enough for an unimproved acre of land (\$100-\$200 an acre [~\$3,000-\$6,000 today]) to men with “small capital” (\$3,000, [~\$85,000 today]) and those with substantial investments (\$10,000, [~\$290,000 today]).⁴⁴ With low-level investment inquiries, the Chamber of Commerce secretary often attempts a delicate balance between extolling Redlands’ “unparalleled beauty” and restrained optimism regarding the inquirer's chances of “making it” in the citrus industry.

However, for larger investors such as G. P. Clapp, the chamber is far more welcoming. Clapp professes a desire to cultivate 10 acres (to start) and that, “I have about \$10,000 to invest, am prepared to work hard, am perfectly sober, with only my wife and self to care for.”⁴⁵ In just five days the Redlands Chamber of Commerce secretary responds very optimistically, stating that he has gotten in touch with “one of the oldest settlers in this end of the valley” and real-estate man H.W. Van Leuven to arrange for purchase because “permit me to say that, based on the character of your letter, I believe success in your case is assured.”⁴⁶ This level of certainty, as well as the quick actions to

⁴⁴ Redlands Chamber of Commerce to R. I. Anthony, “Inquiry about Land Purchase Reply,” February 1, 1908, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply 2. Concerning citrus groves: purchase, prices, cultivation etc., A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection; Joe S. Peterson to Redlands Chamber of Commerce, “Standing with Small Captial,” May 19, 1908, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply 2. Concerning citrus groves: purchase, prices, cultivation etc., A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection; G. P. Clapp to Redlands Chamber of Commerce, “\$10,000 to Invest,” May 11, 1908, 000, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply 2. Concerning citrus groves: purchase, prices, cultivation etc., A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

⁴⁵ G. P. Clapp to Redlands Chamber of Commerce, “\$10,000 to Invest,” May 11, 1908.

⁴⁶ Redlands Chamber of Commerce to G. P. Clapp, “\$10,000 to Invest Reply,” May 16, 1908, 00, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply 2. Concerning citrus groves: purchase, prices, cultivation etc., A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

sell Clapp the land, is absent in the other letters. Clapp's letter stood out to the chamber because his "character" matched the curated community they were striving to create. Vaught notes in his work, "A specialty crop community... was a place where educated, land-owning families lived on small, orderly and prosperous orchards or vineyards in close proximity to one another. It thus fostered neighborliness, strong local social, cultural and political institutions, and economic progress, all in an environment that was esthetically pleasing as well."⁴⁷ This was, at least, the romantic ideal behind the citrus country town ethos (and its corresponding social system), which Bryn Mawr families took to heart. Conveniently this romanticized landscape left out the necessary immigrant labor force which supported the citrus industry, the focus of chapter 2. Over time, white families consolidated their prestige within the country town social system through land ownership, cooperative organization, business ties, marriage, and holding public office.

In Bryn Mawr, these families included a mix of "pioneer" families like the Frink, Curtis, and Van Leuven families as well as newer families like the Stewart, Davis, Cole, Hinkley, Whittier, and Break families who brought their wealth with them from the East Coast. In the Bryn Mawr community, almost all of the positions of power were held by the members of these families. The Frinks were grove owners, law enforcement agents, and grocery store owners. The Curtis family acted as local election officers, landlords, citrus owners, and even the school librarian. Whittier bought up the entire Drew and Crawford Subdivision to become the largest landowner in Bryn Mawr until he sold the

⁴⁷ Often Vaught in his pursuit to defend the horticulturalists slips into the romantic language used in the day. Vaught, *Cultivating California*, 53.

land to the Break family in 1909.⁴⁸



Figure 4: Allen Break, Packinghouse and landowner, and family posing by the family car and house. (Courtesy Archives, A.K. Smiley Public Library)

A family photo of the Breaks, who were land and packinghouse owners, illustrates the portrait of grower life in a citrus country town. The family poses by representations of their wealth, their large two-story home with a veranda and hammock on the porch, together they all sit in Breaks' new automobile while vines and flours are flourishing around them. The Breaks large family are presented as industrious wealthy citizens reveling in natural bounty while having access to the newest technologies.

White families became the landowners who viewed themselves as the creators of society and rural industry in their communities. However, these families were not the

⁴⁸ "Bryn Mawr Town Site Land Is Sold," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, March 1, 1912.

only residents of the area, alongside them lived significantly less wealthy immigrant laborer communities. They occupied the lowest rungs in the country town social system because they did not embody the white and wealthy ideal. White landowning families were highly successful at using their wealth and status within the citrus industry to consolidate power in the community, which would last for generations.

Cooperative business ventures bound the small group of agribusinessmen in financial agreements and helped them establish complete economic control. The first business venture begun in the area was the Bryn Mawr Water Company, incorporated in 1899.⁴⁹ As scholars like William Deverell have noted, access to water, and, more importantly, the creation of irrigation was central to the transformation of land in California.⁵⁰ Further, water and the importance of irrigation is a central feature of Bailey's conceptualization of modern rurality. In his work on the Country Life Movement, he notes that "Irrigation makes a rural condition: it provides the possibility for a community to develop; and it must, therefore, color the entire life of the community."⁵¹ In this assessment, water is not simply a requirement for life and agriculture but also for the creation of this specific type of community and civilization that must be created through the sheer will of white settlers. Irrigation projects began in Bryn Mawr in 1819 during Spanish colonization with the completion of the Mill Creek

⁴⁹ Hartig observes that the mutual water company was often the start of cooperative business leanings in the citrus industry. "Many grower's first experience in the kind of cooperative capitalistic action necessary to create Sunkist came with their participation in water politics and in particular in the form of the mutual water company." Hartig, "Citrus Growers and the Construction of the Southern California Landscape, 1880-1940," 66.

⁵⁰ Deverell, *Water and Los Angeles*.

⁵¹ Bailey, *The Country-Life Movement in the United States*, 44.

Zanja, but for those not living on Zanja irrigated lands, other means of securing water would be necessary. With a capital stock of \$40,000 (around \$812,000 today), a group of early Bryn Mawr and Redlands men, including land prospector Drew and citrus owners Stewart, Mitchell, and Davis sought to acquire water rights to supply water to their stockholders.⁵² In many ways, the need for water and natural resources bound these landowners together as a community. As members of the local elite, they worked to consolidate ownership of these natural resources in service of industry. These business and community ties would continue to grow with the creation of the Bryn Mawr Citrus Association in 1903 and the Bryn Mawr Orange Growers Association in 1904.⁵³

Regional Connections

In the Inland Empire, the wealthy city of Redlands had long competed with its neighbor Riverside to secure the title of “Citrus King.” In the effort to secure the title of the highest producing citrus region both Riverside and Redlands inflated their statistics by including peripheral areas into their overall citrus exports. Redlands counted its citrus growing region to include the towns of Bryn Mawr, Crafton, Yucaipa, and Highland to augment its numbers. This also worked to the advantage of growers and packinghouse owners in Bryn Mawr who relied on the familiar Redlands name to sell their oranges to East Coast markets. Brands like “Redlands Joy” and “Redlands Pride” were grown in

⁵² “Articles of Incorporation of the Bryn Mawr Water Company,” July 10, 1889, 1994-205/104, San Bernardino County Historical Archives; “Bryn Mawr Water Company Capital Stock,” July 29, 1899, DF 2034 Bryn Mawr (old San Bernardino Mission District), Loma Linda University Heritage Research Center.

⁵³ “Bryn Mawr Citrus Association Articles of Incorporation,” October 12, 1903, 1994-205/115, San Bernardino County Historical Archives; “Bryn Mawr Orange Growers Association Articles of Incorporation,” December 16, 1904, 1994-205/126, San Bernardino County Historical Archives.

Bryn Mawr and were picked and processed by the Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican residents of Bryn Mawr.⁵⁴

Close relationships between growers in Redlands and Bryn Mawr created larger business, and even familial, relationships which strengthened growers' positions within their community. Although not technically Redlands residents or workers, Bryn Mawr workers' fates were often ruled by the collusion of Redlands and Bryn Mawr citrus growers, those elite members in the country town social system.⁵⁵ Groupings of various small county towns around larger, but still relatively rural towns created a larger network of local leaders all invested in propagating the country town ethos in the San Bernardino Valley. These leadership networks exerted considerable pressure on local politics and created shared understandings of what citrus communities looked like, largely influenced by Country Life Progressive ideals of cultivation and profit.

As a whole, these networked citrus country towns strove to produce culture bearers and politicians to represent their interests locally, regionally, and at the state level, this served to entrench their status as elites. As Vaught expertly notes in his work, growers "Viewing the world through the prism of their local communities...took great pride in producing their crops, believed in the virtues of rural life even while becoming fully integrated into the market economy, exhibited a strong cooperative bent, and above

⁵⁴ In 1928, the city of Redlands was considering annexing the area of Bryn Mawr, but negotiations fell through. See "Annexation Suggestions Viewed with Interest by Redlands Men," *The San Bernardino Sun*, June 14, 1928, Newspapers.com.

⁵⁵ This is clearly evident in the archives. Records for "Redlands" packinghouses also include records for Bryn Mawr packing companies such as the Break packing house, Norwood Fruit company, Bryn Mawr Fruit Growers' Association, and Mission Fruit Growers, all based in Bryn Mawr. This close relationship and partnership makes Redlands and Bryn Mawr citrus interests nearly interchangeable in this period.

all regarded themselves not as a separate interest group but as a special class of people responsible for the very well-being of the larger society.”⁵⁶ The “well-being of the larger society” was tied with the promotion of white, Protestant ideals centering on cultivating “development” and technological “progress.”

Just as the citrus belt created a line that linked agricultural landscapes, the grower communities who inhabited the citriscaple communicated and shared their values publicly. Newspapers like *The San Bernardino County Sun*, and the *Citrograph* covered these organizations and events and helped stimulate a community of those trying to create the ideal country life in their towns. As an example, *The San Bernardino County Sun* had a section called “The Farm and Orchard: Country Life in the San Bernardino Daily Sun,” which highlighted stories about growers, educational breakthroughs, and the status of various agricultural industries in the area.⁵⁷

The country town social system’s prioritization of the role of elites and educated agriculturalists was taken to heart by the various communities in the Inland Empire and most vividly displayed during the National Orange Show in San Bernardino. The National Orange Show became a key venue where grower elites could build community with others in their class and where they could display their local power. As with most mythic tales, the history of the National Orange Show rests on its humble beginnings. The San Bernardino National Orange Show began in 1911 as a marketing scheme, paving

⁵⁶ Vaught, *Cultivating California*, 46.

⁵⁷ Local print culture helped solidify an “imagined” community of growers across the small towns dotting the San Bernardino Valley. “The Farm and Orchard,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, February 21, 1926; Benedict R. O’G Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Rev. ed. (London ; Verso, 2006).

over land which had previously been San Bernardino's red-light district, and in so doing refabricated San Bernardino's image. Its purpose was to promote the citrus industry and tourism to the Inland Empire through an "unforgettable" spectacle. On March 7, 1911, the newspaper's entire front page was dedicated to the show with the headlines such as "National Orange Show is a Marvel to All Beholders."

Among these articles was extensive commentary from the President of the National Orange Show, W. W. Brison Jr., who boldly claimed, "I do not believe an orange show has ever been held that was equal to the First National Orange Show which we will open here this evening. It was but a few weeks ago that the idea was first presented to a few of the businessmen of this city, but they have been busy and have made good on the production of the finest show of its kind in history."⁵⁸ His and other glorious accounts of bountiful citrus and opulence are in direct contradiction with the documented images of the exhibition, which instead show a tent and modest fruit displays, mostly in crates arranged to form some decorative patterns. Tellingly, this trial show's main audiences were the growers and citrus industry leaders, the general public was not invited to participate. From its inception, we see the show's dual purpose, to bring outsiders in but also as a space where insiders could engage with others of their same class. This early community-

⁵⁸ "Formal Opening of Citrus Event," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, March 7, 1911.



Figure 5: 1911 National Orange Show Exterior. (Courtesy of Tom Atchley)

building exercise allowed the country town elite to close ranks and congratulate themselves on their accomplishments. Brison's statement indicates that the First National Orange Show was a whirlwind event hastily erected by the wealthy businessmen in the Inland Empire in what seems to be a desperate attempt at publicity and self-congratulatory fanfare. Functioning similarly to a trade association gathering, those who were invested in the citrus industry and its promotion attended the gathering. Even after the first Orange Show, the main attendees were growers and their families.

From the inception of the First National Orange Show, the growers were working to establish this event as a momentous one. In the news articles at the time the growers' words ring with nervous excitement and a determination that the show must continue into the future.⁵⁹ Even during the opening address, before the show was open to the public, it was clear that no matter the success or failure of the show it was destined to become an annual event for Californians and Americans. This was achieved in part through the participation of the state. Simply holding a regional celebration was not enough to satisfy this grower class. As Vaught states, "California growers saw themselves at the forefront of progress. Agriculture, after all, was the state's leading industry, and no other commercial enterprise brought the state as much prestige."⁶⁰ The grower's beliefs in their importance to the state economy justified these types of celebrations. In true pomp and circumstance, the governor of California pressed what the newspapers called a "magic button" at the capital which turned on lights and signaled fireworks to officially open the show.⁶¹ Validation from the state through the participation (however minimal) of the governor seems to reinforce the place of the citrus grower within the economy of the state. His ability to control or start the celebration from Sacramento established a link, of communication, power, and money between the California Capitol and San Bernardino citrus growers. The show demonstrated growers' influence at the local level and in state politics, entrenching their elite control through agribusiness.

⁵⁹ "San Bernardino, you have done well. Now keep it up. It is a good thing for all cities and towns in the country and vicinity which have gumption enough to take advantage of the opportunities offered." From "Must Continue the Orange Show," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, March 19, 1911.

⁶⁰ Vaught, *Cultivating California*, 46.

⁶¹ "National Orange Show Is a Marvel to All Beholders," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, March 7, 1911.

Spectacle: The San Bernardino National Orange Show

The San Bernardino National Orange Show not only served to cultivate community relationships for those members of the country town social system, but it also served as a vehicle to promote an idealization of citrus growers' attempts at manifesting a landscape that blended rural with the industrial. After the first National Orange Show's "success" a committee of four prominent men drafted a plan for continuing the National Orange Show in perpetuity, the purpose of the show to continue "keeping the name of San Bernardino heralded to the world as a city of progress and a city that can and does do things."⁶² Using the power of spectacle growers created an iconography of modern industrial rural life in the citrus belt. The successful creation of the image of paradise and utopia by industry elites was dependent upon creating a seductive spectacle for consumers that intertwined images of progress and industry with a veneer of exoticism and abundance.

Spectacle is an economic construction, as Guy Debord theorizes: "The spectacle is capital accumulated to the point that it becomes images."⁶³ The power of the spectacle rests on capitalism and the subsequent need for audiences to consume images and the representation of reality. Spectacle acts as a visual manifestation of capitalistic power both over the economy, land, and society. In the Inland Empire, this manifested as the image of the orange, the perfect round, unblemished, sweet-tasting product magically transported from sunny California to the frigid East Coast. It represented the trifecta of

⁶² "Orange Show Plan," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, April 6, 1911.

⁶³ Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Ken Knabb (Berkeley, CA: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2014), 11.

nature's beauty, industry, and capital. The image of the orange was used to support the power of the ruling elite, as Debord states, "The spectacle is the ruling order's nonstop discourse about itself, its never-ending monologue of self-praise, its self-portrait at the stage of totalitarian domination of all aspects of life."⁶⁴ In the 1910s, the citrus industry leaders in the Inland Empire used the National Orange Show as a publicity platform to fabricate the Inland Empire's public image and history of California, which centered on the citrus industry and modeling citrus agriculture and the lifestyle it endeared as modern and industrial. The creation of this spectacle served as means to entrench and claim the power of the citrus industry and highlight through spectacle the imagined ideal citrus country town.

While scholars like Carey McWilliams and Phoebe Kropp have noted the existence of citrus shows, the literature has not yet explored these venues.⁶⁵ Analyzing these sites and particularly the San Bernardino National Orange Show provides crucial insight into how grower elites idealized their own position, their community, and the industry itself. In many ways, this "Mid-Winter Event" served as an insider celebration of their own citrus ideals and allowed proponents of the industry to celebrate an idealized

⁶⁴ Debord, 11.

⁶⁵ McWilliams mentions the show briefly in his discussion of the citrus industry in California. His paragraph long description of the show focuses on the 1930s fairs. McWilliams, *Southern California Country*, 225. Kropp details agricultural displays briefly in her chapter "The Fair: Panama-California Exposition and Regional Ambitions" Phoebe S. Kropp, *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place*, 103. A graduate student publication by David Shanta mentions the National Orange Show in reference to an imagined community of citrus growers. David Shanta, "Shared Spaces, Separate Lives: Community Formation in the California Citrus Industry during the Great Depression," *HISTORY IN THE MAKING*, 2012, 65 and 69.

and sanitized image of their citrus country town.⁶⁶ The iconography displayed at the National Orange Show showcased the actions of white growers while erasing the labor of non-whites. On display was an image of utopian rurality that erased those outside the country town social system. The celebration blended grower interests, what Vaught describes as their “agrarian and capitalist perspectives,” within the spectacle of California boosterism, producing a local version of shameless promotion that blended visual displays of wealth, beauty, and fecundity with notions of technology and industry to bolster growers’ positions.

While many authors have commented on the unique construction of California boosterism, scholars have not connected this regional movement to the Country Life Movement. Combining social memory studies of pageantry, fairs, and tourism with the history of the citrus industry illustrates how tourism and boosterism were tied to a particular imagining of rural space through the use of historical fantasy and spectacle. In Carey McWilliams’ 1949 groundbreaking work *North from Mexico*, McWilliams coined the now widely used term “Fantasy Heritage” regarding the idealization of an imaginary foundational Spanish culture in Southern California.⁶⁷ Over fifty years later, Matt García in *A World of Its Own* takes this quotation as the basis of his exploration of race and place in the California citrus belt. In his work, he focuses on race relations in the citrus industry, expanding on McWilliams’ work by actively including labor histories as well as

⁶⁶ The early San Bernardino National Orange Shows took place in February. Much of the marketing relied on the significance of the season, that San Bernadino was temperate and comfortable even in winter and that even in the heart of winter bountiful fruit was growing with abandon.

⁶⁷ For more on the “Fantasy Heritage” of California see García, *A World of Its Own*; McWilliams, Meier, and García, *North from Mexico*; McWilliams, *Southern California Country*; Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe*.

oral histories from Mexican Americans. As historian William Deverell notes about Los Angeles, “It is a city that wished for what it worked diligently to *invent*. And that inventing [entails]... the whitewashing of other stories, cultures, and other people’s memories on the landscape.”⁶⁸ The act of inventing was not limited to Los Angeles but spread throughout the citrus belt. Images of fantasy characters like the Spanish don and sultry senorita were mobilized to conjure a European past for the region. Manipulated versions of the colonial Spanish past erased Native Americans and Mexicans from the founding stories of California. Recently Inland Empire historian Genevieve Carpio has added to the conversation on fantasy pasts, revising the name, associating it with the propagation of citrus fruit, and explaining “the Anglo Fantasy Past’s navel myth provided a narrative of early California invoking the entrepreneurial spirit of Anglo American farmers as they transformed a Mexican desert into a cornucopia.”⁶⁹ At the National Orange Show, the celebration of white grower achievements vis-à-vis the citrus industry worked to elevate the status of their own labor while relegating the labor of nonwhites to the past and realm of fantasy. Further, the imagery promoted an image of rural industrialization, embodying the “correct” relationship between human industry and nature.

In January 1913 only a month before the third National Orange Show, an article in *West Coast Magazine* sang the praises of the past and future Orange Shows. The

⁶⁸ Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe*, 19. Italics original.

⁶⁹ Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*, 41.

author, John McGroarty, author of the *Mission Play*, describes the show as an overwhelming spectacle,

But what will you say, what will be your thoughts as you pass under the mammoth tents at San Bernardino and behold literally millions of oranges in boxes, row upon row; oranges builded [sic] into locomotives, globes, goddesses of liberty, wind mills, swastikas, the pillars of Pompey, bungalows, elephants, landscapes and a thousand and one other contrivances? And then there will be the sunlit city by day and its myriad lights by night the Mountains of Mystery, snowcrowded, [sic] the pretty girls, the bands, the carnivals, fiestas and happiness on every hand.⁷⁰

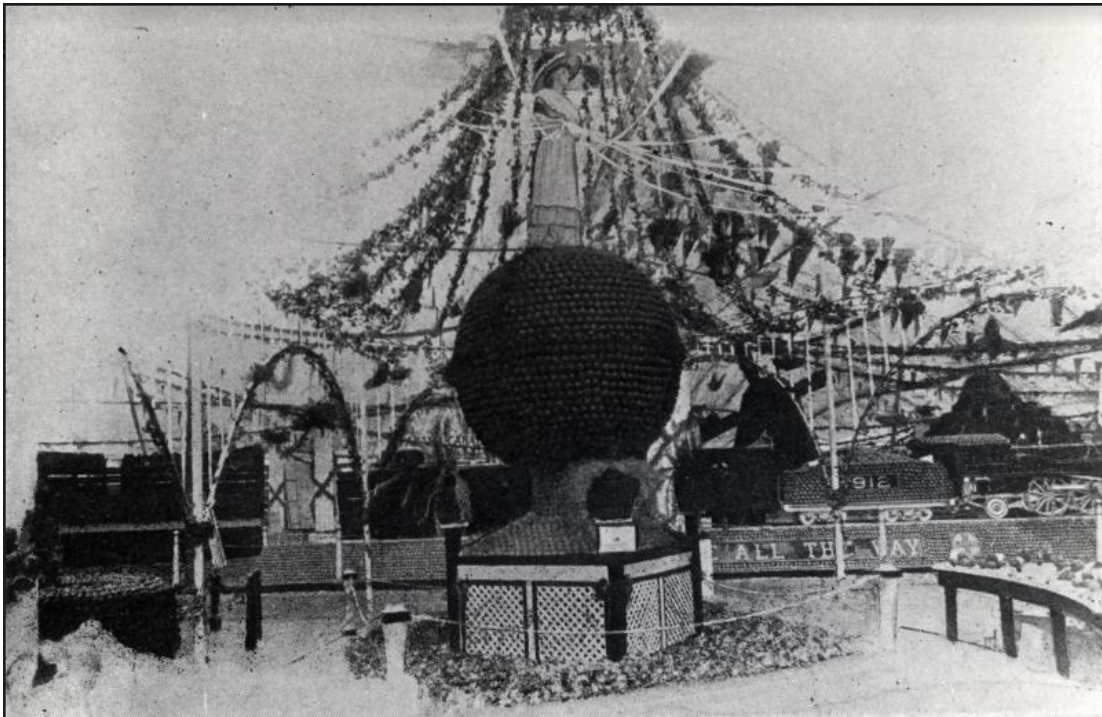


Figure 6: Inside the tent at the 1912 National Orange Show.
(Courtesy Archives, A.K. Smiley Public Library)

McGroarty as a weaver of fantasy, pens a barrage of beauty and fanfare. But nature is not the sole source of this beauty, it is the “contrivances,” the things formed, created, conceived, developed by the growers out of their own minds and inventiveness which are truly spectacular. The items listed are mostly signs of industry and human development, a

⁷⁰ McGroarty, “San Bernardino and the National Orange Show,” 20.

windmill to draw power, a pastoral bungalow, or else symbols representing the ideals of the growers, most obviously lady liberty with her torch of imperialistic progress. These symbols of industry and Americanism constructed out of oranges become a physical representation of nature combined with American industriousness. The exhibits are meant not only to show off the natural agricultural product but, to create visual symbols of rural industrialization, art, and nature intertwined through human ingenuity. McGroarty acknowledges that the landscape created by the National Orange Show was contrived, as contrived as a locomotive constructed from oranges.

The feature exhibits were the primary vessel for promotional imagery at the Orange Show. These exhibits served as a means by which the Inland Empire could be viewed as an ideal rural space. As historian Phoebe S. Kropp states about the California landscape at large, “Each city and region retains its own look. Yet a city’s buildings display more than local character and house more than the history that passes through them.”⁷¹ Within the National Orange Show’s tents, the members of the citrus communities built idealized representations of their prosperous towns, called feature exhibits, which spectacularized the ideals of the Country Life Movement.⁷² The National Orange Show was the stage on which country towns could establish their reputations and solidify their image (and iconography) to a large audience. Country towns like Etiwanda, Fontana, Rialto, Redlands, and Bryn Mawr were invited to create large displays depicting

⁷¹ Phoebe S. Kropp, *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place* (University of California Press, 2006), 1.

⁷² The names of individual growers could also be made during the show in the citrus fruit awards. Individual growers could submit crates of various varieties of citrus for judging.

the fecundity and excess brought about by agricultural development.⁷³ These feature exhibits were a unique opportunity to translate postcard imagery into real life, if only for a week. Within each of these feature exhibits the Southern California regional identity was created, manifested, and broadcasted. The goal was to dazzle guests with unimaginable bounty expressed through popular cultural imagery and historical memory.

Exhibits often featured miniaturized and sensationalized architecture or landscape, which was then translated into the language of citrus. In an image from the 1914 National Orange Show, behind the Santa Fe train are exhibits from three separate citrus country towns, Upland, Ontario, and Corona. Upland's feature exhibit is the town itself, represented as a miniaturized diorama of its orderly city streets and industrial amenities, particularly electricity. Surrounding the diorama are 6 pillars each with brightly glowing light bulbs, mirroring them are dozens of small, electrified streetlights in the diorama. Electricity, of course, was a modern industrial amenity, but streetlights became symbols of a modern city, safe in the dark, a product of careful city planning, and

⁷³ Bryn Mawr did not ever host a feature exhibit but many of the growers did submit their wares for the orange displays. In many cases Bryn Mawr grower's received top prizes. "First Prizes Are Awarded," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, February 17, 1924; "Orange People Know Who's Who," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, March 10, 1911; "Orange Show Fruit Awards," *The San Bernardino Sun*, February 21, 1932, Newspapers.com; "National Orange Show Display Awards Made," *The Los Angeles Times*, February 18, 1934, Newspapers.com.

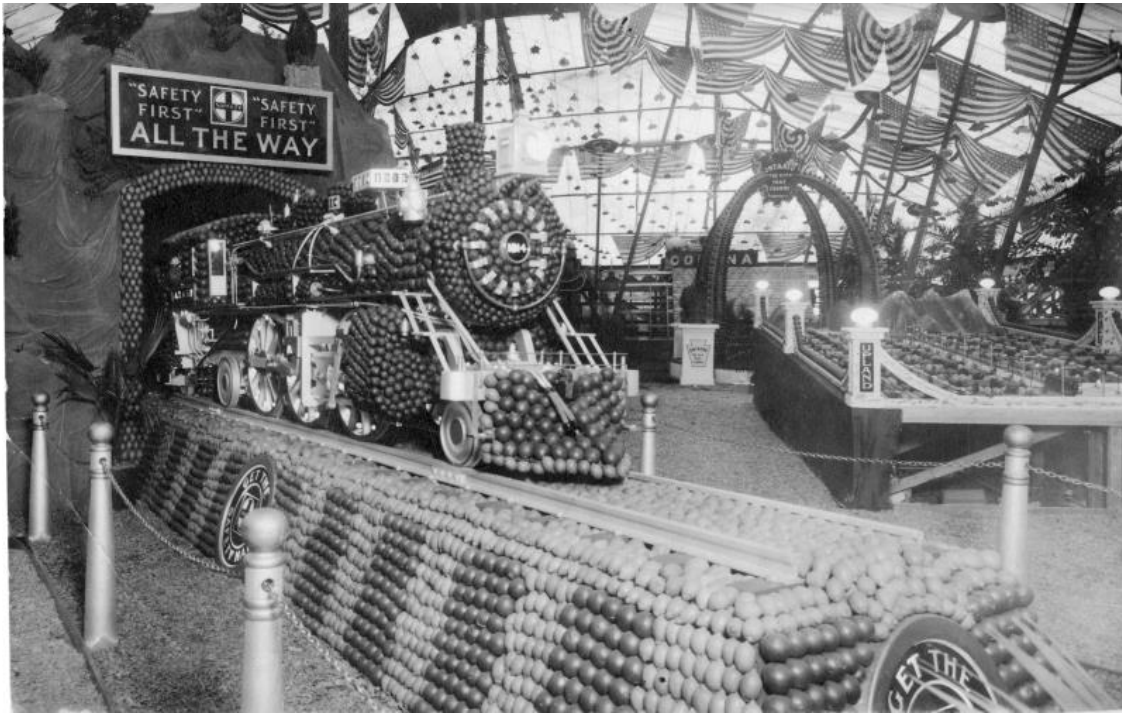


Figure 7: The 1914 National Orange Show. Visible is the Santa Fe Exhibit, Ontario Exhibit, Corona Exhibit and Upland Exhibit. (Courtesy Archives, A.K. Smiley Public Library)

markers of beauty.⁷⁴ However, the exhibit is not purely industrial, surrounding the display are perfect oranges, the diorama is filled with foliage and small trees while snowcapped mountains rise from the table. Upland created a literal manifestation of their citrus country town, modeling the aspects that made it a modern rural landscape. The National Orange Show's portable manufactured fantasy displays stood in for the real landscape and allowed visitors to "tour" all of the main citrus towns in one location.

Trains and railroads were key images in the California imaginary. They transported tourists to California and were a symbol of progress, human engineering, and

⁷⁴ David E. Nye, *American Illuminations: Urban Lighting, 1800-1920*, MIT Press Scholarship Online (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2018).

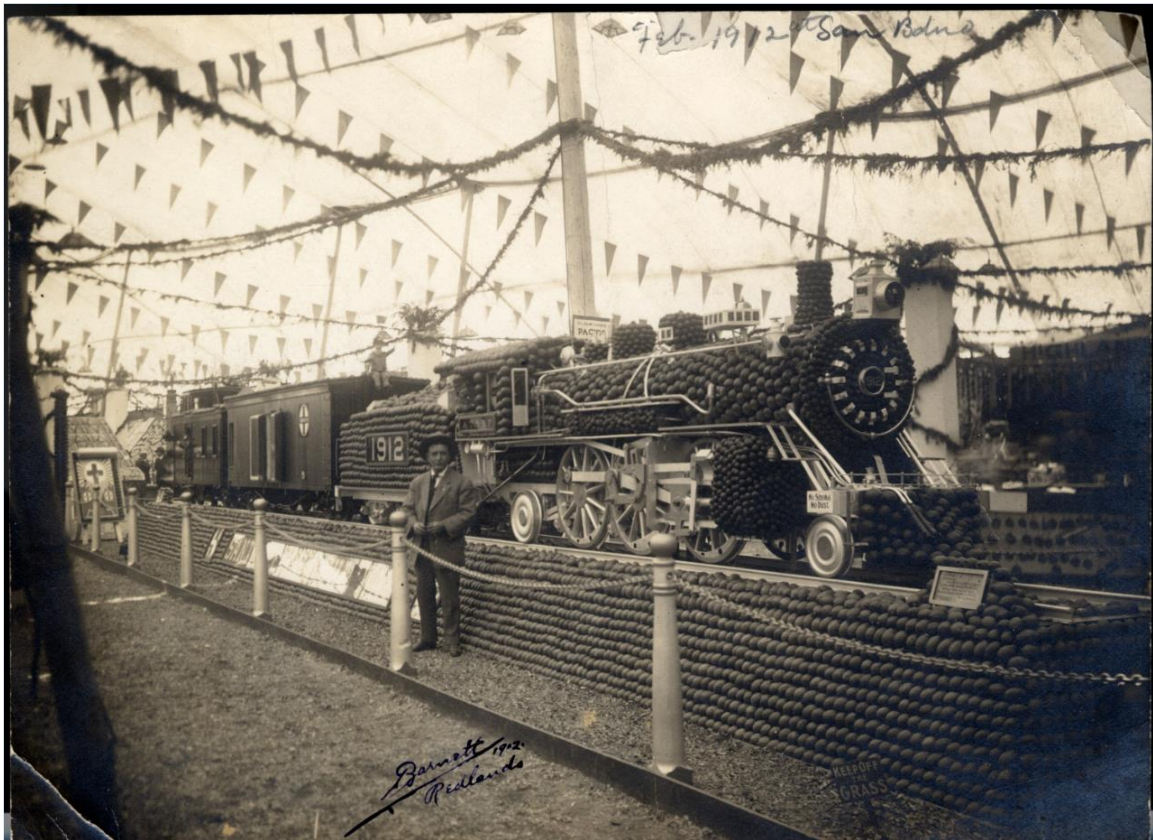


Figure 8: Santa Fe Train Exhibit at the Second National Orange Show, February 1912. (Courtesy Archives, A.K. Smiley Public Library)

human domination over the landscape. The railroad was a central part of popular Southern California imagery, used by the railroad companies as well as urban tourism boosters in Los Angeles. As a symbol of adventure and new frontiers, it worked wonders for tourism.⁷⁵ However, when situated within the citrus country town context the imagery took on a different meaning. Locomotives were critical to sustaining the citrus industry and allowed relatively quick transportation of citrus fruit across the country. The rail lines were the key ties between California and the rest of the nation. Logically, the image of a

⁷⁵ Alfred Runte, "Promoting the Golden West: Advertising and the Railroad," *California History* 70, no. 1 (1991): 33, <https://doi.org/10.2307/25158553>.

train constructed out of oranges became the main publicity image for the Second National Orange Show. An image of the “natural” groves and man-made ingenuity was the ideal image to sell a country town, for it embodied the country life balance between the benefits of nature and the country and the mechanical modernity of the city, as Leo Marx would say, “the machine in the garden.”⁷⁶ The image shows an exhibit created by the Santa Fe Railroad with whom the Orange Show organizers had negotiated reduced fares for show visitors. The Santa Fe Railroad was a crucial link to the Midwest, with Illinois at one end and the California cities of San Francisco and San Diego at the other. Railroad tracks represented the ties that linked the country to the city, the modern with the pastoral. A variation of this railroad exhibit was repeated nearly every year.

Water and irrigation were common themes in the show because they recalled the industry and human development to transform Southern California. California had inherited the mythos of the West, a landscape imagined as an empty desert frontier. While the mythos was captivating and did promote tourism and the insatiable demand for Buffalo Bill shows and the western genre, it contrasted wildly from the fertile agricultural valley that Inland Empire citrus leaders were trying to sell.

To counter an image of barren land, boosters emphasized their control over water resources. For example, the Rialto Chamber of Commerce created an artificial pond to display its plentiful liquid resources and its control over them, as symbolized by the bridge. Rialto’s bridge over a small pond and miniature gondola is a replica of the Venice Rialto Bridge, the oldest of the Grand Canal’s four ornate bridges. When this bridge was

⁷⁶ Marx, *The Machine in the Garden*.

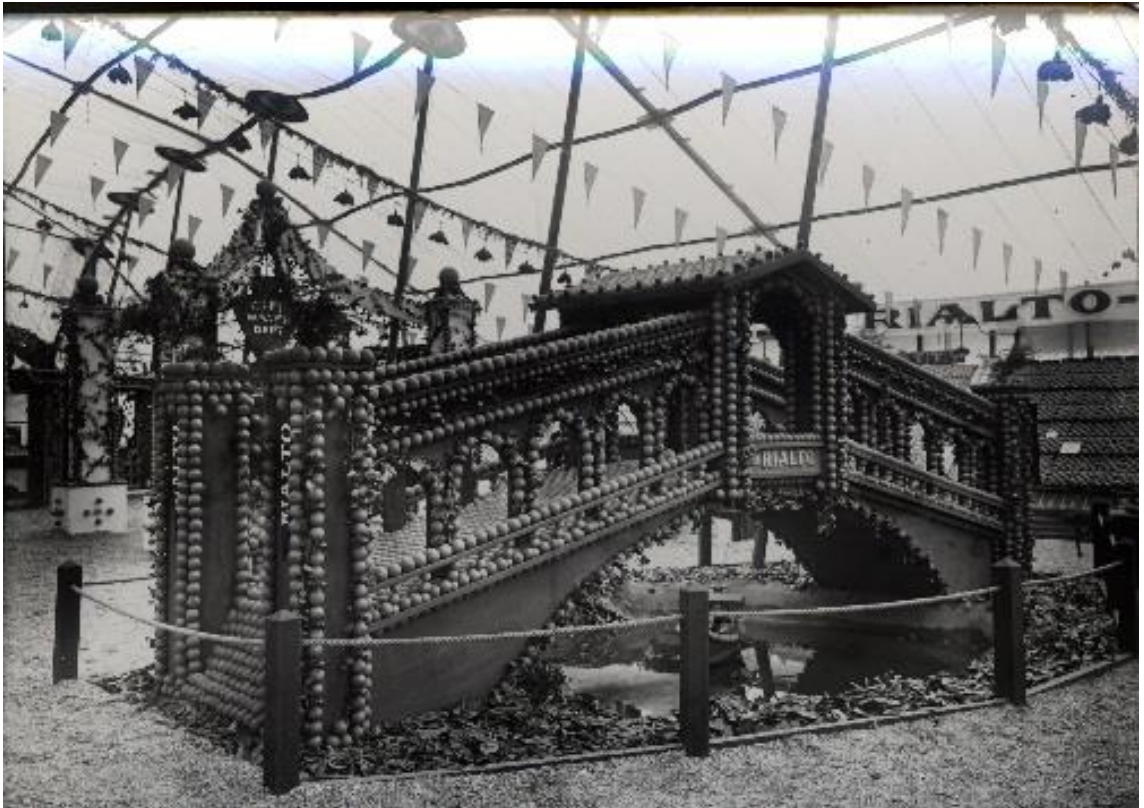


Figure 9: Rialto Bridge at the 3rd National Orange Show. (Courtesy Archives, A.K. Smiley Public Library)

exhibited in 1911 Rialto had yet to be incorporated as a city, they were in the process of finding their identity and adopted the motto “a bridge to progress.” 1911 was a trial run where they presented themselves as a grand vacation destination through the image of the Rialto Bridge, which still graces their city seal. The bridge, a human construction over a natural resource is representative of progress, of human control over waterways much as the Venice canal represents human’s ability to make space in a lagoon. In melding old and new world iconography the bridge becomes its own symbol, “a green framework is covered and all the detail carried out with lemons, navels, grapefruit, and tangerines,

creating a most beautiful effect."⁷⁷ The glory of this new modern American Rialto Bridge was not built from ancient stone, rather by golden oranges. Rialto identifies itself as antithetical to the dry, desolate image of California and the American West, by creating an image of a city in control of its water supply. The same bridge was presented at the 1911, 1912, and 1913 shows and each time received high praise.

Rural industrialization began as an imaginary. Those in the citrus industry attempted to modernize rural space, created visual imagery which represented the ideals of modern industrial rurality. As Don Mitchell argues,

Landscape is thus not just ideology, it is *visual* ideology. "Landscape" is not so much experienced as *seen*. If landscape is thus a way of seeing, Peter Jackson has therefore concluded, "then there are potentially as many ways of seeing as there are eyes to see." Potentially, perhaps. But this ignores the fact that "landscape" is a relation of power, an ideological rendering of spatial relations. Landscapes transform the facts of a place into a controlled representation, an imposition of order in which one (or perhaps a few) dominant ways of seeing are substituted for all ways of seeing and experiencing.⁷⁸ Through the spectacle of the National Orange Show, country town elites crafted their own representation, one that reproduced the citrus country town social system by emphasizing whiteness, order, modernity, and industry. The show served to actualize utopia and to obscure what was unsightly. Under the flourishes of banners and streamers, the citrus industry's reliance on a non-white labor force, the indigenous presence on the land, and the true wilderness of the region could be forgotten. It was here at this show that the imagined community of citrus growing country towns could assemble under one roof to assert their importance not just to the region but also to the state and nation.

⁷⁷ "National Orange Show Is a Marvel to All Beholders," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, March 7, 1911.

⁷⁸ Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, 27.

The National Orange Show was a liminal space at the borders of reality and fantasy. The building blocks of the show - the multitude of citrus fruits - were real, but what growers and boosters constructed from citrus was a pure fantasy of an invented past and imagined present. The National Orange Show became a venue where temporarily, the power of spectacle could turn the citrus fantasy utopia into reality, thereby manifesting the landscape of modern rurality.⁷⁹ Under the massive tents of the National Orange Show, this inaccessible reality is briefly constructed. The growers themselves and the few tourists who visited could revel in this manifested citrus fantasy, an idealized representation of rural industrialization as landscape. This constructed landscape then becomes the stand-in for the real landscape, the signifier becomes the signified. The National Orange Show is a temporary reality woven together by reiterated images, which are themselves products of economic capital, wishful thinking, and the successes of the country towns themselves.

The corollary to this spectacle was the industrial tents and displays. If the feature exhibits represented the idyllic and timeless beauty of the country town, the industrial tents represented elite industrial modernity. The industrial tents focused on the machinery needed to transform the landscape into its ideal form and make the lives of those living in these country towns more convenient. This industrial section, although not as remarked

⁷⁹ The created landscape of the National Orange Show mirrors the process of landscape creation outlined by Don Mitchell. The landscape's transmutation into ideology helped uphold the country town social system. "The representation of the state, and particularly of the state's landscapes, takes on a life of its own, seemingly quite disconnected from the realities of both the material landscape from which it arises and from the everyday life and work of the people of the place. Allowed to float free, untethered to any material world, representations of landscape become pure ideology, able to be reshaped by all manner of powerful interests, and available to be put to use to structure and control not just meaning, but also the lives of those who live in the landscape." Mitchell, 9.

upon in the newspapers, was where ideas about progress, modernity, and proper country life living were disseminated and advertised. While the industrial section did feature smudge pots, tractors, and other farm technologies, it also concentrated on the modern amenities that members of country towns should have. *The San Bernardino County Sun* stated that “There is nothing incongruous in the fact that one of the notable exhibits in the industrial section of the orange show consists of motor cars... Everybody who raises oranges and everyone who eats them wants an automobile and the orange show has furnished the opportunity for a display that is tempting all the people of both classes.”⁸⁰ In this article, the *Sun* is establishing that the exhibition of non-citrus producing technologies should be exhibited in the industrial tent. Secondly, it establishes the existence of two classes of people, those who produce oranges and those who eat them. Cleverly, this serves to erase those who do not fit into the country town social system comprised of wealthy (and therefore assumed to be white) citizenry. It also speaks to the wealth accumulated in citrus country towns. Implying that this wealthy citizenry has the desire and also the ability to own an automobile speaks to Country Life ideals of wealth, modernity, and industry.

In 1924, the industrial exhibits were expanded through the Department of Citrus Education. Here visitors could learn about the newest fumigation methods, learn about the many citrus varieties, and learn the basics of smudge pot use.⁸¹ This tent also included

⁸⁰ “Motor Cars in Exhibition at Show,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, February 23, 1912, Newspapers.com.

⁸¹ “Proper Citrus Culture Told in Department,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, February 17, 1924, Newspapers.com.

displays and exhibits from the various agricultural education sources in the valley including the Citrus Experimentation Station in Riverside, Chaffey Union High School, and the San Bernardino and Riverside County Horticultural Commissions.⁸² These education resources were a key feature of the efforts of Country-Lifers during this era. As Bailey stated in his book section “Special Schools for Agriculture,” “I am committed to the idea that there should be strong local centers of interest in rural communities, for thereby we develop local pride and incentive.”⁸³ San Bernardino’s many local schools were able to achieve this dual purpose, first as a place in which the agricultural ideas could be disseminated and researched but also based on their presence at the National Orange Show, they did create both pride and a community of agribusinessmen. These universities, high schools, and commissions became powerhouses in the region, they solidified agricultural education and they also served as a platform to create community and justify exclusion.

One exhibit was more difficult to place, fitting neither as a purely industrial feature nor as a landscape, this was the display of citrus female labor. In 1915 Fontana introduced its model packinghouse. The packinghouse was an important structure within the citrus country towns. They would usually be the largest structures in the town and were critical in transforming naturally grown products into gleaming, uniform consumer

⁸² There are no existing pictures of the early industrial tent displays. In the early years of *The San Bernardino County Sun* there were very few images in the newspaper and these few were often reserved for the feature exhibits. Another source of images that I use are tourist post cards. The industrial displays must not have been deemed enticing enough to be made into postcards.

⁸³ Bailey, *The Country-Life Movement in the United States*, 77.



Fontana Packing Plant

Figure 10: Fontana Feature Exhibit Model Packing Plant from the 1915 National Orange Show, printed in the Midwest Magazine. (Courtesy Archives, A.K. Smiley Public Library)

items for shipment across the country. The packinghouse was a transformative space, yet there was a tension between who and what transformed these fruits. On one hand, packinghouses represented the ideals of rural industrialization. A newspaper article describing the display states that “Every modern piece of equipment which is found in the most up-to-date association house is found in the Fontana exhibit.”⁸⁴ By emphasizing that the equipment is on the cutting edge, the processing of oranges is understood to be a modern-industrial miracle. The article also mentions box machines and separators and

⁸⁴ “Packing House of Fontana Is Novel,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, February 19, 1915.

specific technology meant to get oranges to the consumer in the most efficient way possible. However, those hard at work on the machines packing the fruit are, “A bevy of pretty girls, clad in the official orange show gowns deftly wrap[ing] the fruit as it comes from the separating equipment.”⁸⁵ The labor of these young white women is rendered as play and the focus on their physical appearance diminishes the significance of their labor. The exhibit’s insistence on the industrial nature of packinghouses and infantilization of the “pretty girl” workers serve to cover up the reliance on embodied labor in the citrus industry.

As Don Mitchell has stated regarding California agriculture, “Only by erasing -- or completely aestheticizing -- the workers who made that way of life is its celebration possible.”⁸⁶ The National Orange Show sought to aestheticize the citrus industry, and to do so it necessitated aestheticizing labor. The model packinghouse rather than the work of picking was the ideal work to aestheticize because it was largely considered women’s work. The citrus industry advertisement imagery as indicated by Don Sackman, often used gendered codes, “Indeed, one of the most recurring motifs in Sunkist advertising was of the woman’s hand offering the fruit.”⁸⁷ In the model packinghouse exhibit, they sought to cover the labor of these white women under their smiles, to code their handwork with the omnipresent image of a dainty woman’s hand offering a perfect orange. Despite its attempt at aestheticization, this exhibit hinted at the tensions lying beneath the façade of the idealistic community. The citrus country town leaders and

⁸⁵ “Packing House of Fontana Is Novel.”

⁸⁶ Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, 20.

⁸⁷ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 97.

growers who owned the land, bought new modern equipment, participated in the Horticultural Commission, and planned the National Orange Show, were not the ones who used this equipment. Behind the façade of the citrus feature displays, industrial marvels, and “pretty girls,” was a significant labor force consisting of some white women from the Northeast and increasingly, Mexican families.

From the optimistic headlines of *The San Bernardino County Sun*, it seemed like San Bernardino’s citrus country towns embodied modern industrial rurality. The creation of irrigation technologies, citrus cooperative organizations, and the National Orange Show spectacle pointed to the undeniable importance of citrus horticulture and the grower elites in the region. In 1926 the *Sun* exclaimed, “Show Marks Milestone in Endless Path of Progress.” This ideal of continual progress and improvement epitomizes the boundless hope of Country Lifers. As Bailey claimed, “When the rural social sense is thoroughly established, we shall be in a new epoch of rural civilization.”⁸⁸ This ideal and hope for a unified “rural social sense,” while clearly visible in the pageantry and spectacle of the San Bernardino National Orange Show, was itself a glamorous façade like the temporary feature exhibits. This spectacular façade romanticized and, more often, obscured the true racial and class tensions within the country town social system.

While the San Bernardino National Orange Show presented an image of country towns filled with individual industrious horticulturalists it hid the realities of the country town social system which relied on the exploitation of large numbers of low-wage laborers. Chapter 2 will address this cleavage between the idealized image of the citrus

⁸⁸ Bailey, *The Country-Life Movement in the United States*, 98.

country town and reality in Bryn Mawr, California. The ways in which growers attempted to address this discrepancy shaped the racialized landscape. Earlier I used this quotation from Vaught about growers: “Their horticultural ideal was not only to advance themselves materially but also to promote economic and social progress in *their* communities and throughout the state.”⁸⁹ [emphasis added] Vaught views the “specialty crop community” as insular and separate, in many ways replicating the grower’s own perceived ownership of the land and community. In my next chapter, I seek to complicate what “*their*” communities were, how these communities were formed, and who comprised these communities.

⁸⁹ Vaught, *Cultivating California*, 14. Emphasis added.

CHAPTER 2: Landscapes of Grower Control:

Making Space for Immigrants in the Citrus Country Town

In the previous chapter, I traced the ways citrus grower elites envisioned their communities as utopic industrialized rural spaces by combining Progressive Era Country Life idealism and boosteristic spectacle between the 1890s and 1910s. The proliferation of images portraying white control of an idyllic rural industrial space was a façade. The citrus industry's success relied on the continued exploitation of a nonwhite immigrant workforce of Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican laborers. The presence of foreign, non-white, non-Protestant workers posed a threat to the vision of white rural utopia, and as a result, growers attempted to regulate the lives of nonwhite residents. While growers and members of the citrus country town social system held significant power, their efforts to control the Mexican population were tenuous and often exaggerated to placate white anxieties. In the face of these efforts to regulate Mexican space, residents resisted and adapted to the situation by nurturing families and communal relations. These spaces became central to the Bryn Mawr Mexican community and their identity, becoming sites of celebration, fulfillment, and belonging.¹

¹ González provides an excellent example of grower's reasonings for creating housing: "The Association's 1925 Annual Report reflected on their settlement: "The Mexican camp each year proves of great benefit to the Association. At the beginning of the season it assures a supply of men who have had the experience with our methods of picking and the standards required by the Association...Aside from this feature, it serves to prevent labor troubles since the large percentage of contented employees exerts a beneficial influence upon the floating labor which each year must be employed to fill out the crews" Gilbert G. González, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-1950*, Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Centennial Series (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 64.

Through processes of policing, subdivision creation, and the advertisement of Americanization efforts through the press, white growers hoped to illustrate their control over the Mexican population and allay other white residents' fears about their workforce. These fears included a belief that Mexicans had a proclivity towards violence, laziness, improper hygiene, and other vices such as gambling, drinking, and drug use. Practices of control sought to impress upon Mexican workers the correct ways to exist in rural space so their labor could continue to support the prosperity of the citrus industry and, by extension, the citrus country town. I argue that the Mexican subdivision (Mexican space in white rural space) worked to secure the permanent place of the Mexican American labor force on the landscape even as it served to aestheticize, sanitize, and reform the community to fit into codes of rural whiteness.

Conceptions and Constructions of Labor and Laborers in the Citrus Industry

Despite the spectacularized rural whiteness displayed at the National Orange Show during the 1910s, in the 1890s Mexican and Chinese immigrants began moving to the Bryn Mawr area in larger numbers. While the citrus country town was continually marketed as a white landscape, between roughly the 1890s and 1910s its residents were relatively diverse. However, between 1900 and 1920 in the aftermath of anti-Asian exclusion, the space transitioned from a multi-racial to a bi-racial space with a strict Mexican/white binary.² Further, there was not a time in the country town's history that it was a completely white space. In fact, the citrus country town would never have existed

² These exclusionary laws included: The Anti-Coolie Act, 1862; Page Act, 1875; Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882; Geary Act, 1892, Gentlemen's Agreement, 1907.

without non-white residents. The image of white rural utopia was an illusion, which growers sought to maintain through illustrations of control. In this section, I will first use archival letters to unpack growers' reliance on, and even preference for, immigrant labor, then I will utilize census data to trace demographic shifts in Bryn Mawr, referred to as the Mission District in census records, thereby tracing the contours of Bryn Mawr's early racialized landscape.

While Bryn Mawr was a separate area with its own post office, when it came to the citrus industry, the area was inherently tied to Redlands. For instance, the Redlands Chamber of Commerce, the department which dealt with business in Redlands, viewed the nearby Bryn Mawr, Highland, and Mentone areas as a part of the Redlands citrus industry. When the chamber received inquiries about Redlands packinghouses, they responded with lists that included packinghouses in Bryn Mawr and Highland.³ Members of the Bryn Mawr citrus country town elite constituted a shared reading public consuming local media such as the *Redlands Daily Facts* and *The San Bernardino County Sun*, shared business relationships, and even nurtured family connections with the Redlands elite. The labor pool also circulated between Redlands and Bryn Mawr. Citrus industry workers living in the vicinity could work at many different packinghouses and/or groves across the Redlands sphere of influence.

³ A letter in 1918 for instance counseled John Witt of Annapolis, California to "communicate with the Gold Banner, Redlands-Co-operative, Bryn Mawr, West American, Mutual Orange Growers or the Crown Jewel packinghouses." Redlands Chamber of Commerce to John Witt, "Redlands Packinghouse List," November 25, 1918, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply, A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

Analysis of letters sent to the Redlands Chamber of Commerce in the first decade of the twentieth century regarding purchasing orange groves illustrates the divide between laboring in groves and managing them. The Redlands Chamber of Commerce represented the interests of businesses in the area and acted as a go-between for the public and industry. The secretary of the Chamber often acted as a spokesperson for the citrus industry. The Chamber of Commerce collection letter collection at the A.K. Smiley Public Library provides a glimpse of how the “work” of growing was described to a wider audience. The letters also provide us with the perspectives of the grower elite as they corresponded with people whom they considered to be of their own class. Further, the letters provide a look at the business end of the industry rather than the marketing spectacle.

In these letters, we see how growing was constructed as a gentlemanly and intellectual pursuit, rather than hard labor. A common refrain written by the Chamber of Commerce was that growing oranges “requires more brain than brawn.”⁴ The work of white wealthy growers was understood to be an intellectual and managerial task rather than one of common labor. In explaining to R. I. Anthony, a prospective investor, how simple the care of orange groves would be, the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce explained that “I have in mind a lady who, without previous experience, took sole management of ten acres, three acres being full bearing trees, the balance only four years

⁴ Redlands Chamber of Commerce to W. J. Possons, “Suitable for a Man of 50? Reply,” February 1, 1906, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply 2. Concerning citrus groves: purchase, prices, cultivation etc., A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

old, when she cleared on one crop, after paying taxes and all expenses, \$2,000.”⁵ Orange growing is conceived not as physical labor but as managing and organizing a business. To prove the absence of physical labor the letter emphasizes that even a “lady” could be a successful grove owner and turn a handsome profit.

Despite the claims about the individual ingenuity of white citrus growers and the industrialized, mechanistic nature of the industry, its backbone was large crews of low-paid laborers. In the letters about land sales, the physical labor of picking and processing oranges is nearly invisible. The invisibility of labor and the fact that the grower would not have to engage in strenuous labor himself, was a selling point the Redlands Chamber of Commerce continually reiterated. In one letter, the nature of hired labor was almost assumed, “I have seen a carefully kept set of books of one of our largest growers which showed for eighteen different ten-acre tracts from 21% to 66% net profit, In [sic] every instance the work was all hired, none of it having been done by the owner.”⁶ Those growers who saw themselves “at the forefront of progress” and “of an entirely different class from those found in the same pursuits anywhere,” were in reality completely reliant on their laborers.⁷ In fact, many growers even distanced themselves from supervision.⁸ As the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce indicates “Another of our largest growers

⁵ Redlands Chamber of Commerce to R. I. Anthony, “Inquiry about Land Purchase Reply,” February 1, 1908.

⁶ Redlands Chamber of Commerce to A. C. Hoff, “Profit in Groves,” 1908, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply 2. Concerning citrus groves: purchase, prices, cultivation etc., A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

⁷ Vaught, *Cultivating California*, 46.

⁸For more on Juan Crow and the plantation structure in the West see: John Weber, *From South Texas to the Nation: The Exploitation of Mexican Labor in the Twentieth Century*, 1 edition (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Foley, *The White Scourge Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture*.

remarked a few days ago that he knew nothing that comes out of the soil which has paid as well as oranges when the care, superintendence and all the work was done by hired labor.”⁹ For those managing groves, wealth seemed to literally grow on trees, trees they did not even need to pick themselves in order to reap the harvest. Hired labor was ubiquitous, but more importantly, the growers completely and wholly relied on it to realize their profits.

While the citrus grower elite engaged themselves in building up the country town, forming cooperatives, and planning annual festivals, someone needed to be doing the actual work of picking, packing, and readying the oranges for sale. While the Chamber of Commerce simply refers to all labor as “hired labor,” growers had particular expectations for labor, that it be cheap, nearby, and widely available. Previous scholars have consistently remarked on the growers' demands for large numbers of cheap labor but have not extensively focused on local residency as a prerequisite.¹⁰ The Redlands Chamber of Commerce answered letters from people wanting to find work in the groves. The majority of the letters were written by white workers interested in moving to California from the Midwest and East Coast. A common refrain echoed by the Redlands Chamber of Commerce in the late 1900s was that laborers should be “on the ground” and if not that they “come prepared to wait, but willing to hustle and take the first respectable work that

⁹ Redlands Chamber of Commerce to A. C. Hoff, “Profit in Groves,” 1908.

¹⁰ Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*; Sackman, “By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them”; Bob Garcia, *Citrus, Labor, and Community in East San Bernardino Valley: An Oral History*, n.d.; Gilbert G. González, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-1950*, Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Centennial Series (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

can be secured at any price and show yourself competent and worthy, when you will soon get what you want and receive good pay for the same.”¹¹ Growers wanted laborers who were living in the area and ready to work for a substandard wage in hopes of an improved future. A “reliable laborer” in the eyes of citrus growers was one eager to receive whatever wages they were given, but also one who lived in the area as an established resident.

The ideal “reliable laborer” was not necessarily a white worker. Many white Midwesterners sought work in the groves and packinghouses, and they often wrote in to see if they could make connections and get on established work rolls.¹² However, the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce always demurred in favor of an evolutionary ideology favoring those “on the ground.” The Chamber of Commerce oft-repeated the following phrase, “We are growing, and in a growing country there is always room for one more, followed by survival of the fittest.”¹³ In the eyes of the Chamber, residents had - to extend their metaphor - an evolutionary advantage, they were better equipped for the battle of survival. Prioritizing residency and cheap wages meant that workers considered the “fittest” for citrus labor did not always ascribe to established racial hierarchies.

¹¹ Redlands Chamber of Commerce to Edwin Edge, “Wages for a Young Fellow? Response,” November 10, 1908, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply, A.K Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

¹² This group of writers were often lower class and were seeking wage work rather than seeking to invest large sums of money into property.

¹³ Redlands Chamber of Commerce to Edge, “Wages for a Young Fellow? Response,” November 10, 1908.

Early Bryn Mawr: A Multi-Cultural Neighborhood

Employers' desire for local cheap labor was prioritized over upholding racial homogeneity. While the letters show that white easterners were interested in working in the citrus industry, the majority of the labor was performed by an immigrant workforce because they embodied the grower's ideal exploitable, or what they called "reliable," laborer. In the townsite of Bryn Mawr, the first citrus workers were Chinese, Mexican, and most likely Japanese laborers who resided in the Redlands area.¹⁴ Unlike other agricultural industries, citriculture operated year-round. As a result, immigrant laborers did not need to migrate to find other work, instead, they put down roots and built community early in Bryn Mawr's history.¹⁵ These roots are evident in the outlines of neighborhood connections as seen by the 1900 census.¹⁶ While these early neighborhoods are often remembered by local historians as being primarily white

¹⁴ The Bryn Mawr census does not show a population of Japanese laborers in the townsite itself. However, the prevalence of the Japanese community in the city of Redlands and Highland and letters from the Chamber of Commerce discussing Japanese labor indicate it was likely that some Japanese workers picked or packed in Bryn Mawr even if they did not live in Bryn Mawr proper.

¹⁵ Perhaps due to its small size, Bryn Mawr experienced an influx of Mexican laborers in the 1890s when a depression attracted migrant workers. The early immigration wave disrupts established narrative of Mexican settlement in California. It is widely asserted that California cities experienced an influx of Mexican laborers only after the Mexican Revolution in 1910 brought families to the United States. By the time Mexican families were moving into other southern California towns, Mexican residents were already calling Bryn Mawr home. A possible reason that Bryn Mawr does not fit into the established trajectory is that much of the large studies on migration have focused on established cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco. However as more studies of rural areas in California emerge another earlier "wave" of migration might become clearer.

¹⁶ I say "outline" due to the rural nature of the area. The 1900 census does not provide street names, although it was enumerated by the Bryn Mawr postmaster W. J. Lawrence. In order to pinpoint estimated locations, I use compiled local history data about the homes of prominent white residents whose biographies have been carefully recorded by local historical societies to triangulate the locations of their multiethnic neighbors whom the archive has not remembered. The erasure of these multiethnic neighbors from the archive and memory of local history replicates the ideal country life landscape. By populating these neighborhoods with more of its residents I seek to amend the archive and push back against the whitewashed fantasy of the citrus country town.

enclaves of early “pioneers” and ranchers, on many pages of the 1900 census we see areas where multiple groups coalesce. We start on the main residential streets in the Mission District: Cottonwood Row, Pioneer Road, and California Street. These streets were home to many of the prominent “pioneer “families who settled in the 1800s. In general, these white families have been well remembered by local historical societies. Local history narratives have placed them at the center, often mythologizing their accomplishments. For the purpose of this dissertation, local history narratives provide an understanding of particular families’ locations and biographies.

On California Street lived the pioneer and citrus owning Curtis family, a family instrumental in shaping Bryn Mawr into a country town. William and Mary Curtis arrived in Bryn Mawr, which was then called Old San Bernardino, in 1861.¹⁷ They began their citrus venture in the 1880s with 70 acres and built up one of the largest orange grove properties in the area.¹⁸ In addition to owning large amounts of land, they and their descendants held a variety of positions in the community including librarian, school board trustee, and Mission Precinct election clerk. Despite the Curtis’ status, they lived near non-Protestant, and even, non-white neighbors. Their direct neighbors are the Callahans, Irish immigrants working on the railroad station, and right next to them are Mexican and Chinese residents.¹⁹ For example, in the Gonzalez family, both heads of

¹⁷ “Pioneers Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Arrival Here,” *The Redlands Daily Facts*, October 12, 1911, XX, no 82 edition, A.K. Smiley Public Library.

¹⁸ The Curtis House, a two-story Victorian home was built in 1886 has been preserved by the city of Loma Linda. In 2017, the house was moved from its original location to Heritage Park once new homes were built on the land.

¹⁹ William J. Lawrence, “Twelfth Census of the United States: Schedule No. 1. - Population” (San Bernardino Township, San Bernardino County, California, June 25, 1900), 8B.

house, Victorino and Juana, were born in Mexico and immigrated in 1893 two years after they were married; their daughter Josepha was born in Arizona in 1888.²⁰ Next to the Gonzalez family are Lee Chan and Lee See from China; they are the only residents listed as farm laborers, which indicates that they were part of the citrus industry labor force.²¹ In the same area are other Mexican families like Louis and Manjalo Hernandez, and the Ostos, the Estrada, and Campos families. Many of these families had immigrated years before; for instance, Pifar Verdusco immigrated in 1893.²² The occupation of those listed in the census records indicates day or farm labor as the primary occupation for these residents. Due to the nature of the record, which does not include parcel or street names, it seems likely that these Mexican and Chinese residents, some of whom are listed as railroad workers, lived near the California Street railroad.

Prominent citrus grower and one of the shareholders for the Bryn Mawr Citrus Association and the Bryn Mawr Water Company, Edward M. Izard, also lived in the Mission District. As a businessman, who invested in risky ventures like barren mines, and as a farmer he became an early leader in building the citrus industry in the area as an advocate of cooperative business models.²³ Next to Izard are two families from Mexico, the Morreno and Estrada families, and six individual residents like Evaristo Escalante, Deysevelley Rascon, and Pablo García.²⁴ Evaristo Escalante, for instance, had

²⁰ William J. Lawrence, 8B.

²¹ William J. Lawrence, 8B.

²² William J. Lawrence, 8B.

²³ Apart from his investments in the citrus industry he also invested elsewhere including in copper mines. "Want Their Money Back," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, May 28, 1902.

²⁴ William J. Lawrence, "Twelfth Census of the United States: Schedule No. 1. - Population," June 25, 1900, 11A.

immigrated to the U.S. in 1881, and the Moreno family immigrated in 1890. In total, 16 Mexican residents live next to and around Izard and the Fuller families.²⁵ The Fullers would later own their own citrus packing house and were deeply invested in the citrus industry. In 1900, the Fuller family was boarding a room to Henrique Alvernas (listed in the census as Portuguese) and living next to Jose García.²⁶ The census also shows a boarding house owned by Yong Shi with eleven Chinese bachelor boarders next door to the White and Holmes families.²⁷ All of the boarders including Mang Shin, Moy Thui Me Yong Ling are listed as farm laborers. Down the street was another boarding house owned by Yum Lun, which housed eight boarders including Han Long, Sing Yong, and Le Lou.²⁸ While their white neighbors are listed as farmers, the occupation of the Chinese boarders indicates that they were farm laborers, most likely engaged with the citrus industry. Census records belie the emerging multi-national and multi-ethnic neighborhood, and we can see how the citrus industry was built by and upon a community of a diverse group of residents.

In the Redlands area as well as the rest of the Southern California citrus belt, Chinese and Japanese laborers were the primary labor force working in the orange groves. In general, growers were pleased with these workers' performance and viewed them to be careful workers who cultivated knowledge on citriculture.²⁹ In fact, Chinese

²⁵ William J. Lawrence, 11A.

²⁶ William J. Lawrence, 11A.

²⁷ William J. Lawrence, "Twelfth Census of the United States: Schedule No. 1. - Population" (San Bernardino Township, San Bernardino County, California, June 27, 1900), 12B.

²⁸ William J. Lawrence, 12B.

²⁹ García spends much time discussing Japanese farmers, especially those who owned land. He notes that "White farmers ultimately sought to eliminate independent and ambitious Japanese farmers from the citrus

laborers revolutionized the cultivation and care of citrus crops. While their labor was recognized as indispensable there was substantial debate as to their place within society. Many newspaper editorials in California expressed frustration with a labor regime that did not prioritize white labor, “Suppose the citrus fruit in Southern California cannot be picked without Oriental labor, does it follow that we must get Oriental labor? Or may we consider the other alternative, that possibly the citrus fruit industry...might fail if necessary, to preserve something more important?”³⁰ The newspaper was asking a simple question, should profit come before realizing the dream of a homogenous white rural society? The answer when it came to Chinese immigration was no, white civilization should come before industry.

The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 banned all immigration of Chinese laborers and was extended in 1902 with the Geary Act. Immigration may have been halted by law, but Chinese immigrants in California continued to live and work in various communities including Redlands and Bryn Mawr. Many Chinese laborers lived in Bryn Mawr and Redlands in various boarding homes, but their continued presence inflamed passions. On the night of August 30th, 1893, an angry mob of white Redlanders violently invaded

belt with tactics similar to those used against the Chinese.” My analysis focuses on the growers’ views regarding Japanese laborers specifically. García, *A World of Its Own*, 58.

³⁰ The author utilizes the language of eugenics as a scare tactic to convince their audience. “Suppose business and agriculture, as now established, simply can not go on without Oriental labor. Does it follow that we must get Oriental labor? Or may we consider the other alternative, that possibly the citrus fruit industry, and the businesses dependent on it, might fail if necessary, to preserve something more important? Is there anything more important? Is there anything more important than business? Most assuredly there is. To raise oranges is important, but to raise men is more important. The crop, in any community, that really counts is the human crop. And to maintain that human crop pure, in race and institutions, is precisely the task laid on us of the border...To preserve American institutions intact and American blood uncorrupted, that is more important than to raise citrus fruits.” “Fruit or Men,” *The Fresno Morning Republican*, February 24, 1910.

Chinatown and demanded that the residents vacate within 48 hours. Despite racial violence, the 1900 and 1910 census indicate that the Chinese community stood their ground, continuing to live and work (even owning their own businesses) in both Redlands and Bryn Mawr. However, with immigrant exclusion, the community could not grow in the way it once did. At the same time, Chinese immigration was curbed, the citrus industry was booming, demanding more and more labor. Growers without the prospect of significant Chinese labor then moved on to exploit the labor of an increasing number of Japanese immigrants.

The expulsion of a source of cheap labor was a threat to white growers' livelihoods; as a result, they sought to position themselves, and perhaps truly viewed themselves, as victims to justify their preference for immigrant labor. Labor became a source of deep anxiety. They knew that the existence of their position within the citrus country town rested on the labor of those outside their race and class, they also knew that immigrant labor disrupted the image of white rural utopia they were seeking to uphold. Using the language of victimization, agribusinessmen attempted to present their labor situation in a way that did not provoke the ire of the rest of the community and helped them maintain their position of power within the country town social system. As noted by journalist and historian Carey McWilliams, "Nothing short of an absolute surplus of field workers will satisfy the 'needs' of the industry; anything less than a surplus is regarded as a 'labor shortage.'"³¹ McWilliams's focus on the term "needs" seeks to mock the term

³¹ McWilliams, *Ill Fares the Land*, 42.

itself, framing it as a means used to manipulate the labor market to achieve increased profitability. Citrus growers' description of their labor preferences as "needs" sought to prove that immigrant labor was essential. While growers may have played up their victimization to garner sympathy, their reliance on non-white labor was real. They prized a local, year-round workforce which above all else, would work for substandard wages. In so doing they created the necessity of non-white permanent residents in the country town.

Even with curbed Chinese immigration and the prospects of a shrinking Chinese community, there were still existing tensions between white workers and the citrus industrialists.³² Some of the labor inquiries sent to the Chamber of Commerce indicate that potential white laborers living in the east were concerned about foreign labor in the area. Correspondences were preoccupied with the threat of immigrant labor. One letter writer asked about labor availability hoping that, "the flood of imported cheap labor has not cut off the opportunity."³³ At times the Chamber of Commerce denies the prevalent use of immigrant labor, other times they frame themselves as victims of the labor supply. One letter dated from 1905, responded directly to these concerns.

³² As Sucheng Chan has noted, Chinese immigrants were not completely driven out of agricultural California. Particularly in the San Joaquin Valley there were actually increases in Chinese tenancy. For more see: García, *A World of Its Own*; Sucheng Chan, *This Bittersweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1860-1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

³³ W. J. Waggoner to Thaxter, "Flood of Imported Cheap Labor," November 5, 1907, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply, A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

The labor market is in a demoralized condition in Redlands and vicinity, due to so many unreliable men applying for and receiving work, and doing the work in such a manner as to compel employers to get Japanese, which all our orange growers very much regret, preferring, as they do to give reliable white men \$2 per day, rather than \$1.6 to a reliable Jap.³⁴

The Chamber of Commerce's short response gives helpful insight into the mindset of citrus industrialists. We see the ways in which a racialized pay scale was accepted and ingrained in the industry. However, what is perhaps most interesting is the way in which the writer categorizes the growers' choice of ethnic labor over white labor as something which was forced upon them. Centering of the grower as the primary victim of "unreliable" labor attempts to distance the grower from accusations of disadvantaging white labor. The growers' prioritization of Japanese labor over white labor in many ways disrupted the Country Life ideal, which situated the rural landscape as being a purely white Protestant space.

The Emergence of the Mexican/White Binary in Bryn Mawr

The 1910 census indicates a significant shift in racial geography. In 1910 the census taker did note the streets where residents lived making it easier to track the location and movement of residents. While Mexican and Mexican Americans were still able to live in proximity to white space, the number of Chinese residents dropped significantly, reflecting the anti-Asian laws and sentiment of the day. In 1910, the Mission District no longer had any Chinese boarding houses.³⁵ A few Chinese students,

³⁴ Edward D. Ripley to Redlands Chamber of Commerce, "Labor Conditions Inquiry," January 16, 1905, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply, A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

³⁵ Peter Solmaugh, "Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 - Population" (Mission Township, San Bernardino County, California, May 5, 1910).

most likely studying at the College of Medical Evangelists of Loma Linda, are listed in the census.³⁶ It is clear that by 1910 the Chinese residents were no longer part of the community. With their absence, the landscape becomes further stratified.

By 1920, the racialized landscape was defined by a white/Mexican racial binary that would persist throughout the twentieth century. The 1920s decade saw the beginning of the consolidation of Mission Road as the affluent white space for citrus country town elites. Census records show that Nathaniel Hinkley, a member of the prominent civil engineering and grove owning family, moved away from Pioneer Road and their neighbors, the Italian American Ronzones family, to live on Mission Road during this period. The Hinkley's new neighbors were the long-time citrus grove owning Van Leuven and the Breaks, who were soon to be packinghouse owners.³⁷

³⁶ The Seventh Day Adventists operating out of the College of Medical Evangelists in Loma Linda were engaged with Missionary work around the globe but increasingly in China. In fact I.H. Evans believed that "China is probably the most needy country, along medical lines, in Asia." Ernest Lloyd, "Before Honor Is Humility," *Medical Evangelist* 05, no. 01 (January 1913): 8; "Mrs. Dr. Selmon Visit," *Medical Evangelist* 01, no. 03 (January 1909): 22; A. C. Selmon, M. D., "Medical Missionary Work in China," *Medical Evangelist* 05, no. 07 (September 1913): 14–18; I. H. Evans, "The Medical Evangelist in China," *Medical Evangelist* 06, no. 03 (January 1919): 11–13.

³⁷ Peter Solmaugh, "Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 - Population," May 5, 1910, 7B.

Although the transition was beginning in 1910, Mission Road was still a multiethnic space. In between the Van Leuven and Frink families lived the Requejo



Figure 11: The Van Leuven family reunion at the turn of the twentieth century. Including many Frink family members. (Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society Digital Archive, Courtesy Joe Frink)

family (misspelled Reguejo in the census).³⁸ The Van Leuven and Frink families were the two oldest families in Bryn Mawr wielding considerable acreage and influence through their deep family connections. The Requejo family had two young daughters, Delfina and Mary, only a few years younger than Leonora Beatrice Bahr, granddaughter of Alonzo

³⁸ Peter Solmaugh, "Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 - Population" (Mission Township, San Bernardino County, California, May 5, 1910), 8A.

Frink. Farther down are the Rodriguez and Hernandez families as well as the Portuguese Pasquel family. On the nearby Bryn Mawr Avenue, Mark and Ella Lopez lived with their four children near Gass, and Van Leuven family members as well as the Dallas family who owned the town grocery store.³⁹ The 1910 census shows that the main residential section of Bryn Mawr and the Mission District were not completely racially segregated. Even the most prominent citizens within the country town structure were neighbors with Mexican and Mexican Americans.

The exclusion and subsequent hostility towards Chinese and Japanese workers in California upheld the ideal of the citrus country town fantasy but threatened the reality of the citrus industry's labor structure. The exclusion of further Chinese and Japanese immigration stifled the supply of "reliable" and cheap workers threatening grower profits. Citrus growers turned to exploit Mexican and Mexican Americans as replacements in the citrus labor regime. However, even into the late 1920s, the substitution of Mexican laborers for Asian laborers was viewed with regret by growers. Redlands grower C.M. Brown, for example, lamented that:

In the early days of this industry, when we only had a small amount of fruit, we got our oranges picked much cheaper than de [sic] do now by the Mexicans. They are not desirable labor, but since the old days when we had plenty of Chinamen, and even now when the Japs are cutt [sic] off, they are absolutely indispensable.⁴⁰

³⁹ Peter Solmaugh, "Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 - Population" (Mission Township, San Bernardino County, California, May 14, 1910), 11A.

⁴⁰ C. M. Brown to A.E. Isham, "Response to Packinghouse Survey," September 20, 1929, VII Citrus Collection, F. Commercial Aspects 7) Survey of Packinghosues 1937, 1929, A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

The exclusion of Chinese and Japanese immigration and the shrinking of the community in the 1910s and 1920s completely disrupted the citrus labor regime and threatened the spectacular success of the industry. Going forward, growers needed to manage racism and xenophobia, using it to justify the mistreatment of workers and the exploitation of their labor, but make the presence of foreign workers palatable to those living in the country town. They needed to continue to justify the workers' second-class status but prevent all-out exclusion of these workers from the system. After the failure of maintaining Chinese and Japanese workers, many in the industry took new tactics to ensure that Mexican labor did not meet the same fate. Foreign labor was "indispensable" and so there needed to be a place for non-white workers in the citrus country town, even if it conflicted with the ideal of white rurality.

Policing Independent Mexican Space

Despite the ethnic mix of neighbors on Mission Road, for the first time, the 1910 census mapped an area simply labeled “Mexican Town,” “Rail Road Mexican Town,” or

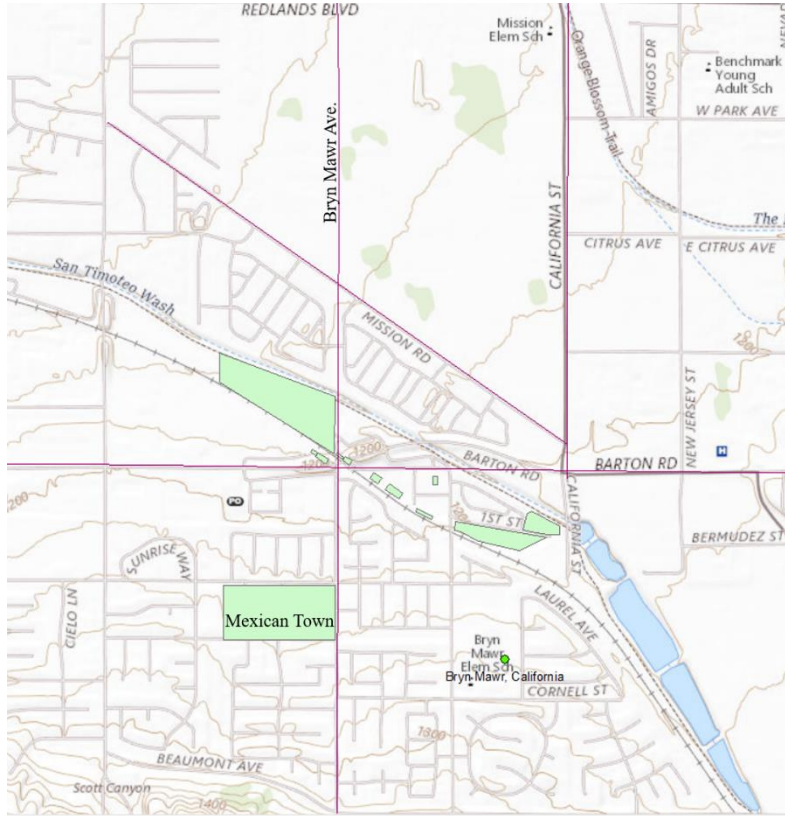


Figure 12: Map of Bryn Mawr and the “Mexican Town” named in the census. (Map created by Author)

alternately “Rail Road Cholo Town.”⁴¹ Although the census makes use of the railroad as a marker, the town was actually between the railroad and the foothills. As newspaper writer Erwin Hein learned from resident John (Juan) Hernandez, “Up Bryn Mawr Avenue, toward the hills, a teeming labor camp housed an earlier

⁴¹ The term “Cholo” has roots in Spanish colonialism. Within the Spanish casta system the term “cholo” often referred to a mixed race individual low on the racial and socio-economic hierarchy. The term was picked up by U.S. writers who often used the term “cholo” and “Mexican” interchangeably. The term implies both racialization as well as poverty. The use of the term within the census map takes from the terms racialized and socio-economic usage and to contemporary readers would likely bring to mind an area comprised of slums or shanties. The term as it is used today has roots in the pachuco look of the 1930s and 1940s. The term was subsequently reclaimed in the 1960s by the Chicano movement as a means to express cultural pride and identity. Peter Solmaugh, “Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 - Population” (Mission Township, San Bernardino County, California, May 25, 1910), 15B.

colony from Mexico, and that's where Hernandez was born."⁴² In the 1910 census, Hernandez and his family are listed as living in the "Rail Road Mexican Town." For the first time, the Bryn Mawr census taker did not use the legally correct racial designator "white" to describe Mexican immigrants.⁴³ In the margins, he wrote out "Mexican" or "Mex" for every single person of Mexican descent, even if they were born in the United States. Indicating racial markers in the census margins was a common practice in San Bernardino County as well as Riverside County.

As racial categories became more restricting so too did space. By officially designating the space in the census as the "Mexican Town," and labeling its residents as "Mex" rather than white, Mexican space is constructed as separate, devoid of the typical markers affixed onto the citrus country town like street names and addresses. As geographer Don Mitchell notes about California labor communities in general, "As growers soon realized, many squatter settlements often became communities, which threatened the historic "right" of growers to determine how their workers interacted with each other."⁴⁴ Labeling Mexican space as separate "towns" indicates the ideological creation of separate communities based on race, existing outside of the white citrus

⁴² Erwin Hein, "Bryn Mawr Says Farewell to the Good Old Days," *Redlands Daily Facts*, December 9, 1972, Newspapers.com.

⁴³ According to the stipulations in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexicans were legally racially categorized as white. Mexicans should have been racially categorized as white in the 1920 census. It was only in 1930 that the racial category of "Mexican" was added to the census. Many scholars have noted that the process of racialization occurred outside of legal designations. For more on processes of racial formation in California see: Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race*; Scott Kurashige, "The Many Facets of Brown: Integration in a Multiracial Society," *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 1 (2004): 56–68, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3659613>; Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens?*; Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California*, New ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

⁴⁴ Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, 180.

country town. The “Mexican Town” became a space in need of policing, and in need of control by citrus country town elites.

The separate “Mexican Towns” described in the census consists of 314 residents, which was a far greater number than in 1900. Further, 104 of these residents self-report being natural-born U.S. citizens (33%), the majority of whom are young children.⁴⁵ Among the names of the many residents are those whose families would live in the area for generations, including Ynocente Maldonado and Daniel and Juana Landeros (misspelled Lauderos in the census). It was these and other families who grew and maintained what would become a vibrant community, despite disruption and grower attempts to control their lives. The community of Mexican, and increasingly, Mexican Americans, was not migratory; they were putting down deep roots which would last for generations. To the white community, it was becoming apparent that the community was on the verge of permanence. The local newspaper, the *Redlands Daily Facts* announced that “The Japanese, Koreans and Chinese are largely migratory, and are not made up of families. With the Mexicans it is different. They are here to stay.”⁴⁶ Of the total Mexican and Mexican American population, 44.5% of the population were children under the age of 17, of these children 66.5% were natural-born citizens of the United States. These records hint at the creation of a largely self-sustaining community of Mexican and Mexican American residents building homes and raising families in Bryn Mawr.

⁴⁵ Peter Solmaugh, “Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 - Population,” May 25, 1910, 14B-17B.

⁴⁶ “Are Planning to Help the Mexican Population of City,” *The Redlands Daily Facts*, January 30, 1911.

In the 1910 “Mexican Towns” described in the census, Mexican and Mexican Americans owned their own homes. According to the 1910 census, many of the Mexican residents of Bryn Mawr owned homes in the “Mexican Town.” Homeownership in the census is self-reported, not cross-referenced with other records, so the records may not be wholly accurate, but the fact that families claimed homeownership and understood themselves to own their homes is significant.⁴⁷ The data indicates that forty-nine families owned their own homes (65% of households) while only twenty-six rented their homes. The large number of independent homeowners described in the census indicates that the area was well established and that the residents had enough financial resources to own their own homes. By referring to the space as the “Rail Road Mexican Town,” the census categorizes the space as an independent and separate “town.” The Mexican neighborhood was not a tent town or a temporary area, it was a permanent ethnic space comprised almost entirely of Mexican and Mexican American families; the only other residents were a Scottish couple. The growing community in the “Mexican Town,” had relative control over the land, however, increased policing would restrict aspects of their lives.

In Redlands and Bryn Mawr, concerns over the growing Mexican community spurred efforts to reform the community and its residents and rid them of their “vices.” As García and González have shown, racial bigotry was a common occurrence in citrus

⁴⁷ Official instructions are as follows: “A home is to be classified as *owned* if it is owned wholly or in part by the head of the family living in the home, or by the wife of the head, or by a son, or a daughter, or other *relative* living in the same house with the head of the family. It is not necessary that full payment for the property should have been made or that the family should be the sole owner.” U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census, “Instructions to Enumerators” (United States Government Printing Office, 1910), 36, <https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/1910instructions.pdf>, Bureau of the Census Library.

and other agricultural towns, in which it was believed that Mexican residents possessed a “Mañana syndrome, [sic] “a proclivity to violence and heavy drinking, low intellectual abilities and more.”⁴⁸ These anxieties played out in the *Redlands Daily Facts* newspaper. Often it was stated as the responsibility of the church and other charitable organizations, along with the police, to better the community, starting by monitoring the family unit. “The Mexican father knows no pleasure but to gamble - except it be the occasional circus. The mother is abused by the father when the latter is drinking. The children grow up untrained in any way.”⁴⁹ The blatant cultural determinism the description reads like a racist anthropology. These central “cultural” issues circle around the leisure activities of the family, gambling, enjoying traveling entertainment, alcohol consumption, and childhood explorations and play. The proposed solution to “the amusement problem of the Mexicans” was proper management of the community.⁵⁰

One of the means to solve the “Mexican problem” was through heavy policing of the Mexican and Mexican American community, particularly by policing recreational activities. Policing was often conducted by Mission Township constable John Hetblack and Redlands constable Joseph Rivera.⁵¹ John Hetblack was a fourth-generation descendent of Benjamin Van Leuven who arrived in the Mission District in 1851. He first

⁴⁸ Gilbert G. González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 7 (University of North Texas Press, 2013), <https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=KjA6Ngt3TQYC&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=guadalupe+chicano+education&ots=YzoHSMt-fl&sig=XeuE2vPuXmMsMwvNM80bL8ECTU4>, vi.

⁴⁹ “Are Planning to Help the Mexican Population of City.”

⁵⁰ “Work Among Mexicans,” *The Redlands Review*, March 17, 1917.

⁵¹ The role of constable was equivalent to the role of sheriff, in that a single individual was tasked with the entire duties of law enforcement in the area.

became a constable in 1906 and continued until he resigned in 1936 and a family member R.M. Van Leuven filled his vacancy.⁵² Rivera was a member of the Redlands police force for 47 years and often partnered with Hetblack to police Mexican communities in Bryn Mawr as well as in Redlands. Rivera was described by the *Redlands Daily Facts* as “a descendent of California’s Spanish Dons.” He was able to leverage his Spanish heritage rather than Mexican ancestry to be elected as constable for twelve consecutive years.⁵³ Together these elected constables played an integral part in policing the Mexican community.

Policing was used as a means to control the community during their leisure time in order to control “vices” that could affect productivity and did not fit into the sober republican morality of the country town. As a result, the *Redlands Daily Facts* repeatedly featured coverage of policing what they perceived to be endemic drug use in the community. A recurring focus was the policing of the Mexican community’s private agricultural practices. Police often conducted raids of the community trying to rid the area of specific agricultural products. On July 4, 1908:

Constable Rivera and Hetblack made the annual raid among the Cholos of Redlands Junction in search of growing plants of bhang, Indian hemp, Cannibis Indica, [sic]

⁵² Hetblack served for twelve years from 1906-1918 and then was reelected in 1926 serving until 1936. “Complete Is Official Count,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, November 14, 1906; “Mission Resident Is in Constable Race with Service Pledge,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, August 27, 1926; “Hetblack Is Victor in Loma Linda Race,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, November 4, 1926; “Loma Linda Residents Ask Fire Protection District,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, January 14, 1936.

⁵³ Previous scholars have observed how individuals claiming Spanish and Portuguese ancestry were able to cross over into white respectability on account of their European origins. Lisa Gordon, for instance, calls these individuals “Euro-Latins” claiming that they “remind us that whiteness is by no means an obvious or universal concept.” For more see: Linda Gordon, *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction* (Cambridge, Mass, 1999), 101, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/txu.059173007490139>; DeLyser, *Ramona Memories*; Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe*.

Mariguana, [sic] or hashish. The plant is known by all these names and a few more. It is one of the worst narcotics known and its growth in Mexico is prohibited by law.⁵⁴

Rivera and Hetblack's raid occurred after the 1907 Poison Act in California, which made it illegal to sell or use cocaine or opiates without a prescription, but before the 1913 amendment to add cannabis to the list of prohibited drugs. Further, it was only in 1937 that the Marijuana tax act prohibited cannabis in the United States apart from industrial and medicinal uses. Note that the paper reports that the growth of cannabis is prohibited in Mexico, not in the United States. While there may have been various local laws, cannabis was only nationally prohibited in Mexico in 1920. Bryn Mawr's Mexican residents were criminalized for growing a crop that was legal in both their "country of origin" and their adopted one. Mexicans are liable for dual criminalization, for breaking laws in the United States, and for being perceived as bringing Mexican laws.

One of the reasons growing Marijuana was criminalized was because of the associations it had with race and assumptions about laziness and violent action. As Dale Gieringer has argued, the prohibition of opium and then cannabis in California was rooted in anti-immigrant sentiment.⁵⁵ As Gieringer notes, much of the Progressive outcry against cannabis was due to rumors of its ability to lead to madness and violence but also because it was understood to be a drug of the Mexican lower classes.⁵⁶ While Gieringer argues that it was only in the 1920s and 1930s that marijuana was brought to the attention of the general public, the Bryn Mawr raid indicates that even before 1910, the citrus

⁵⁴ "Mourning Among Junction Cholos," *Redlands Daily Facts*, July 1, 1908.

⁵⁵ Dale H. Gieringer, "The Forgotten Origins of Cannabis Prohibition in California," *Contemporary Drug Problems* 26, no. 2 (June 1, 1999): 237–88, <https://doi.org/10.1177/009145099902600204>.

⁵⁶ Gieringer, 247.

country town elite of Redlands and Bryn Mawr were concerned about this presumed Mexican laborer drug.⁵⁷

Another drug of concern was alcohol. Drunkenness remained a long-standing concern of Hetblack, so much so that he viewed the regulation of Mexican drinking as his central duty on the job.⁵⁸ Like marijuana, police and citrus leaders alike viewed it as a weekend distraction. In recalling the history of Bryn Mawr, an elderly Jack Clay, a farm implement supplier in Bryn Mawr, remembered that “I used to walk along the avenue with Constable John Hetblack, and he’d search the long drainage ditch for some of the weekend remnants...He’d find a frequent casualty, who needed patching and sobering up.”⁵⁹ While Clay’s account is many decades after the fact, Clay’s memories are significant. First, it indicates the presence of the official Constable in the Mexican Community’s space, what Clay refers to as a “drainage ditch.” Second, Clay’s memory indicates that police’s search for drunkards would occur on a Monday to pick up the “weekend remnants.” Clay’s memory suggests that the policing of the community occurred to make sure that the laborers would be fit and sober to return to work in the groves or packinghouses.

⁵⁷ Gieringer states “Not until the anti-dope campaigns of the 1920s and 1930s did marihuana become familiar with the general public.” (247) Later on page 254, he notes that the “first and only known report of marijuana in California” was from 1913. He also observes on page 259 that in 1914, “In what may be the first U.S. newspaper account of a marijuana cultivation bust, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that two “dream gardens” containing \$500 worth of Indian hemp or “marihuana” had been eradicated by board inspector Roy Jones.” Gieringer, 247, 254, 259.

⁵⁸ In describing his duties: “Constable J. D. Hetblack serving in his twenty-fourth year, has considerable criminal work and not much civil work at present. Draws \$75 per month salary. Arrests quite a number of drunks. He stated there was considerable bootlegging being done in his township.” “Jury Urges Constables’ Jobs Be Made Appointive,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, March 25, 1935.

⁵⁹ Hein, “Bryn Mawr Says Farewell to the Good Old Days.”

In both the policing of recreational marijuana and alcohol use, the police were remedying perceived vice in the community as well as regulating productivity. Both alcohol and marijuana were viewed as factors increasing laziness and in a racialized context the “Mañana syndrome” which ran contrary to growers’ desires for “reliable” labor. By mapping the “menace” of these drugs onto the Mexican laborers, elites were further able to justify the policing of these communities.⁶⁰ The “Mexican Town” was seen as an area that needed excessive surveillance and a periodic show of force in order for the white growers to maintain their authority, restrict recreational leisure in the community, and maintain their “reliable” labor force.

Despite the constable’s power, the insular nature of the “Mexican Town” often frustrated Hetblack’s policing efforts. The community had large garden plots in which a wide variety of crops were grown. Communal organization did not align with the neat delineations of private property exercised by the white community. The article on the Bryn Mawr marijuana raid states that “When questioned as to the presence of the destructive plant in the gardens, those residing near always accused those who had left the colony with having cultivated it, and they, did not even notice it was growing there.”⁶¹ The shifting nature of the growing Mexican community and its relative independence frustrated attempts at individual criminalization. The police’s struggle to

⁶⁰ Policing in Bryn Mawr seems to align well with Gieringer statement that “Evidently there was an incipient interest in suppressing marijuana in certain law enforcement circles, despite a lack of apparent broader public concern.” Gieringer, “The Forgotten Origins of Cannabis Prohibition in California,” 260.

⁶¹ “Mourning Among Junction Cholos.”

regulate Mexican bodies in Mexican space could easily be allayed if growers placed Mexican space under their control.

Relocating the Mexican Community

In consulting with Mexican American community members, I reached out to elder Fred Ramos, who has lived in Bryn Mawr since 1939. He keeps not only his own knowledge and experiences of the past but also preserves knowledge from past community leaders in Bryn Mawr like Danny Landeros and Oddie Martinez, who lived during the first decades of the twentieth century. When I came across a file labeled “labor” in the A.K. Smiley Public Library Heritage Room that contained documentation about a citrus petition made by Mexican American workers I brought copies of the documents to Fred Ramos for him to look over.⁶² When Fred Ramos looked over the documents, he did not remember a strike in the area, but these documents did help him recall a significant piece of history. He told me that in the past growers had falsely accused the community of labor unrest and used purported turmoil as a justification to use the police force to evict Mexican Americans from their neighborhood and move them to a less desirable piece of land by the creek.⁶³ After relaying his story, he asked me to follow him in his car to the original Mexican space, a lot on the southeast corner of Bryn

⁶² By bringing archival records about the Mexican American community to prominent community members I seek to break down the archival threshold and provide access to people who would otherwise feel intimidated by the formal archive.

⁶³ Fred Ramos has often declined to be formally recorded, preferring instead to adhere to traditional storytelling and oral history tradition in which the listener must rely on their interest and memory to pass down the information. As part of accepting diverse records and speaking the language of the community the society respects his wishes but also honors his unrecorded stories as a form of documentation.

Mawr Avenue and Lawton Avenue. Fred Ramos' recollections are supported by Joe Hernandez's description of his birthplace, the original "colony from Mexico," as being located "Up Bryn Mawr avenue, toward the hills."⁶⁴ Putting together oral, archival, and governmental sources indicates that between 1915 and 1920 some altercation over labor conditions was used as an excuse to force Mexican residents to a new area.

The "Mexican Town" on Bryn Mawr Avenue was situated on more desirable land at the foothills of Bryn Mawr. These foothills and especially the land on the "Bryn Mawr

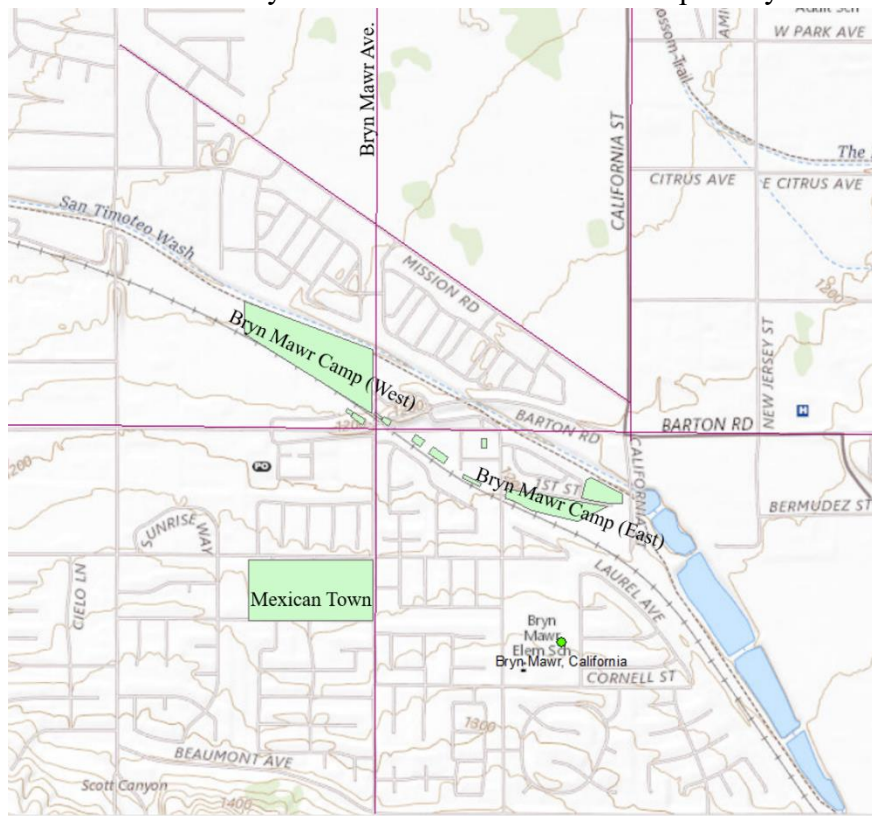


Figure 13: Map of Bryn Mawr, the "Mexican Town," "Bryn Mawr Camp (West)," and "Bryn Mawr Camp (East)" (Map created by Author)

Bench" were known to be highly fertile grounds for agriculture. Already the vast majority of the surrounding land had been used to cultivate oranges, every acre was a chance to make a larger profit. In 1911, the Redlands

⁶⁴ Hein, "Bryn Mawr Says Farewell to the Good Old Days."

Chamber of Commerce was indicating that an acre of land could net about \$250 (\$7,278.66 today) a year and that an acre of land could be bought for \$1000 (about \$27,000 today).⁶⁵ Removing the Mexican community from valuable farmland would open it up for cultivation and profit. The Mexican community was still desperately needed, so they were relocated to a space that was far less desirable, directly next to the railroad tracks and the San Timoteo creek. The new locations were known as the West and East Mexican Camps. The camps' proximity to the San Timoteo creek was particularly undesirable, as Ramos explains, "Nobody wanted this land because of the rails and the river, and this was a flood zone, a floodplain."⁶⁶ As a result, the homes were always at risk during heavy rains when the creek would overflow its bank and flood the neighborhood. The subsequent floods of the 1930s and 1960s were devastating to the community.

The new Mexican space in Bryn Mawr was not just home to those who lived in the original "Mexican Town." Residents who had previously lived in multiracial pockets in Bryn Mawr also moved here in the 1920s. Rather than exist as a multiethnic space, the new Mexican camps were segregated, home only to Mexicans and Mexican Americans. One of the residents of the new "East Mexican Camp Bryn Mawr" was the Requejo family who had previously lived on Mission Road in between the Van Leuven and Frink

⁶⁵ Redlands Chamber of Commerce to John McVain, "Caring for 5 Acres Reply," October 18, 1911, 5, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply 2. Concerning citrus groves: purchase, prices, cultivation etc., A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

⁶⁶ Fred Ramos et al., Group Bryn Mawr Oral History, Video, October 6, 2018, Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society. Frank Coyazo continues to live in his grandmother Rafaela Rey's half rail wood half adobe home.

white “pioneer” families.⁶⁷ Jesus Requejo, now widowed, moved his five children and mother across the San Timoteo Creek and Barton Road to live in a segregated space. The new segregated camps further stratified space in Bryn Mawr. By the 1920 census, Mission Road was now a completely white space home only to the citrus country town elite. Mexican residents still lived in Bryn Mawr, but they could only do so in space designated as Mexican.

By forcing relocation, growers again sought to exercise control over the landscape. The increasing force of white control is also expressed in the reversal of homeownership trends. While the Mexican and Mexican American populations shrank only slightly from 314 residents in 1910 to 273 in 1920, the number of families who self-reported owning their homes in the census declined significantly, from 49 families owning homes in 1910 to only 9 in 1920. Because the community was forcefully removed from their existing space in which they had owned their homes, in 1920, the vast majority of families, 44 households, reported renting their homes. The dramatic reversal in reported homeownership indicates how disruptive the move was. The rootedness and relative independence experienced by many families in the old “Mexican Town” was stripped away. As renters rather than homeowners, they were now beholden to their new landlords.

⁶⁷ Fred Bayne, “Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920 - Population” (Mission Township, San Bernardino County, California, May 25, 1920), 13B.

The Mexican community's coerced relocation was a planned business move on the growers' part.⁶⁸ The landlords of the new Mexican space, which was referred to in the 1920 census as the "Bryn Mawr Camp," were citrus growers. We can see the control of space shift in the naming of the new neighborhoods. Rather than view the space as a separate "Mexican Town" which signifies Mexican belonging and ownership of a separate space, the "Bryn Mawr Camp" moniker placed the space within the confines of the Bryn Mawr citrus country town while further degrading the living conditions from a town to a campsite. The area is a part of Bryn Mawr, but its status as a "camp" indicates that it was an inferior and temporary part of the citrus country town. Although space is segregated, it still is seen as part of the citrus country town spatial zone. These two neighborhoods illustrate how growers carefully carved out particular precarious, undesirable, and low-value space within the citrus country town for their Mexican workers.

The connection between Mexican and white parts of the citrus country town is explained by labor dynamics. In the 1920s we see a split in the community as two separate neighborhoods take shape, referred to as the East and West "Bryn Mawr Camp" in the 1920 census. Mexican neighborhood divisions were shaped by the grove owner's

⁶⁸ It was Carey McWilliams who first noted the trends in the formations of colonias in Southern California, noting that, "It would be misleading...to convey the impression that the location of the colonias was accidental or that it has been determined by the natural play of social forces. On the contrary, there is a sense in which it would be accurate to say that the location of the colonias has been carefully planned. Located as just sufficiently inconvenient distances from the parent community, it naturally became most convenient to establish separate schools and to minimize civic conveniences in the satellite colonia" Carey McWilliams, Matt S. Meier, and Alma M. García, *North from Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States, 3rd Edition* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2016), 173-174.

labor needs. In the west camp, the spaces are delineated in the census record as the “Cole Mexican Camp Bryn Mawr” and the “Frink Mexican Camp Bryn Mawr.”



Figure 14: An early image of citrus work on the Frink Ranch. Later trees would be diligently pruned to keep them short as the precariousness of the tall ladders, as seen in this image, caused significant worker injuries.
(Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society Digital Archive, Courtesy of Joe Frink)

Cole and Frink were early “pioneer” families who owned a significant amount of land and orange groves. By designating ethnic space with the name of the labor overseer, it places the role of the grower at the center of racialized space. It also designates the entire community, men, women, and children alike as a part of the citrus labor regime, headed and in a sense “owned” by the white grove owners. The camps’ creation illustrates a large amount of control exercised by the growers and the subdivisions’ placement indicates the centrality of Mexican labor to the citrus industry. The wealth of families like the Cole and Frinks depended on an entire neighborhood of low-wage workers. The centrality of their labor meant that they would need to have a place within the citrus country town but that their presence needed to be under the control of growers, unlike the earlier “Mexican Town.” Rather than be moved from the center to the periphery, the community was moved to the center of downtown Bryn Mawr.

The new Bryn Mawr camps were also far more contained than before. The original area was farther away from the “downtown” area and comprised of open space. However, the new Mexican camps were placed at the center of “downtown” much closer to the four citrus packinghouses. In addition, natural and man-made boundaries constrained the community. The East Mexican Camp’s boundary was the Southern Pacific railroad tracks which surrounded the area on the south and west. The northern boundary was comprised of a small grove and further north the Barton Road main thoroughfare. The San Timoteo Creek wound its way around the north and east sides of the community. On the east, the camp was constrained by Whittier Avenue and two large packinghouses. The West Mexican Camp was even more constrained. The camp was

shaped like a triangle bounded on all sides. To the southwest, it was bounded by the Southern Pacific Railroad and two packinghouses. To the northeast, it was bounded by the San Timoteo Creek, and to the south bounded by Barton Road. These new areas were spaces of containment, confining the community to a particular portion of land surrounded by citrus industry infrastructure.

Creating Mexican Subdivisions

The mid-1920s saw the creation of two Mexican subdivisions in Bryn Mawr. Within the literature on Mexican community space, analysis of the Mexican village, colonia, or barrio is central while subdivision creation has not been a significant point of discussion.⁶⁹ González does briefly mention subdivision creation in his crucial study of

⁶⁹Although different scholars adapt varying nomenclature all three terms refer to a racialized Mexican space created through processes of economic hardship, labor exploitation, and systems of racial segregation. Carey McWilliams was the first scholar to focus on these areas. He describes these worker labor camps, stating that “being for the most part unincorporated settlements... lack[ing] governmental services, the streets are dusty unpaved lanes, the plumbing is primitive, and the water supply is usually obtained from outdoor hydrants.” McWilliam’s early description of these spaces place them outside of the previews of modern rurality with unpaved roads, poor plumbing, and lack of adequate water supply. By existing outside of the purview of official towns and cities these “worlds of their own” illustrated the literal marginalization of Mexican workers. Scholars built on McWilliams studies of marginalization to study community resilience. In the 1990s, González completed a study on “citrus worker villages.” He adopted the term “village” as a way to indicate both the unofficial nature of these spaces but also their self-sustaining nature. As he states, these sites were not only settlements as described by McWilliams but, “also systems of social, political, and cultural interaction established on the cultural heritage of a community continually adjusting to the constant stream of cultural infusion from the dominant English-speaking environment.” González’s recasting of the colonia as a self-sustaining space that allowed for the expression of community and cultural heritage illuminates these spaces not only as spaces created due to racial preconceptions and structural racism but also as spaces for community solidarity. Other scholars have further adapted these conceptualizations of the Mexican racialized neighborhoods and illustrated how these spaces embody the layering of race, labor politics, and cultural patterns of resistance. Carey McWilliams, *Southern California Country; an Island on the Land*, Essay Index Reprint Series (Freeport, N.Y: Books for Libraries Press, 1970), 219; González, *Labor and Community*, 1994, 8; García, *A World of Its Own*; Nájera, *The Borderlands of Race*.

Mexican labor villages, however, the particular processes of control are not explored.⁷⁰ Far more prevalent in the literature is a discussion of company towns.⁷¹ In the literature on citrus company towns, scholars have focused on the large corporate ranches in which a single company, like the Limoneira Company, controlled all aspects of life.⁷² Tracing subdivision creation breaks from the overwhelming focus on company towns, which while prevalent, were not ubiquitous in the citrus industry, particularly in areas with smaller growers.⁷³ In Bryn Mawr, the creation of Mexican subdivisions resulted not from

⁷⁰ González sees subdivisions as infrastructure rather than assess the power dynamic. "Real estate subdivision was responsible for a good many of today's barrios. A landowner and real estate agent coordinated specifically to establish a Mexican community, usually identified as a "Mexican colony... Like most picker neighborhoods, the community lacked sewers, gas for cooking and heating; had no paved streets, nor even sidewalks. Water lines and electricity did serve the neighborhood, but wood was the primary fuel source. González, *Labor and Community*, 1994, 59.

⁷¹ There is a wide historiography about the company town. As González states in his work, "Three main labor settlement patterns dominated in the California citrus region: (1) full-fledged company towns, owned and run entirely, including businesses and schools, by an enterprise; (2) company-owned tracts within independent communities; (3) and private residential communities, free of company ownership. In the last pattern, housing was commonly family constructed on lots purchased at low prices by the pickers; and house design was patterned after the simple, small wooden structures found in the grower-owned camps." Gilbert G. González, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-1950*, Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Centennial Series (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994). For more on alternate forms of citrus housing see González pages 36-42, José M. Alamillo, *Making Lemonade out of Lemons: Mexican American Labor and Leisure in a California Town, 1880-1960* (University of Illinois Press, 2006), Margo McBane, *The House That Lemons Built: Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Citizenship and the Creation of a Citrus Empire, 1893-1919* (Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2001), and Margo McBane, "Whitening a California Citrus Company Town: Racial Segregation Practices at the Limoneira Company and Santa Paula, 1893—1919," *Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts* 4, no. 2 (Winter 2011).

⁷² Judith Triem, *Limoneira Company: 100 Years of Growing, 1893-1993* (Santa Paula, CA: Limoneira Company, 1993).

⁷³ There is an incredibly rich historiography of post-war subdivisions and the rise of suburbanization in the US, and particularly in the Southwest (cited below). However, this chapter focuses on an earlier boom in subdivision creation at the turn of the century. In the early twentieth century, subdivisions were created as white landowners claimed "empty" land for themselves and sold it to other settlers for profit. Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*, First edition (University of California Press, 2006); Christopher C. Sellers, *Crabgrass Crucible: Suburban Nature and the Rise of Environmentalism in Twentieth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Marilyn S. Johnson, *The Second Gold Rush: Oakland and the East Bay in World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority:*

the demands of a single company but from cultural pressures stemming from a specific type of community organization, the country town social system, a system that revolved around a small group of white grower elite families, who sought exert their control over the townsite. Therefore, I view the Mexican subdivision as being separate from the idea of a company town. In Bryn Mawr, it was not a single company but a group of elites in a single industry working together to control their labor force.

The key difference between subdivisions and company towns was that those living in the subdivisions had the opportunity, if not always the means, to purchase the

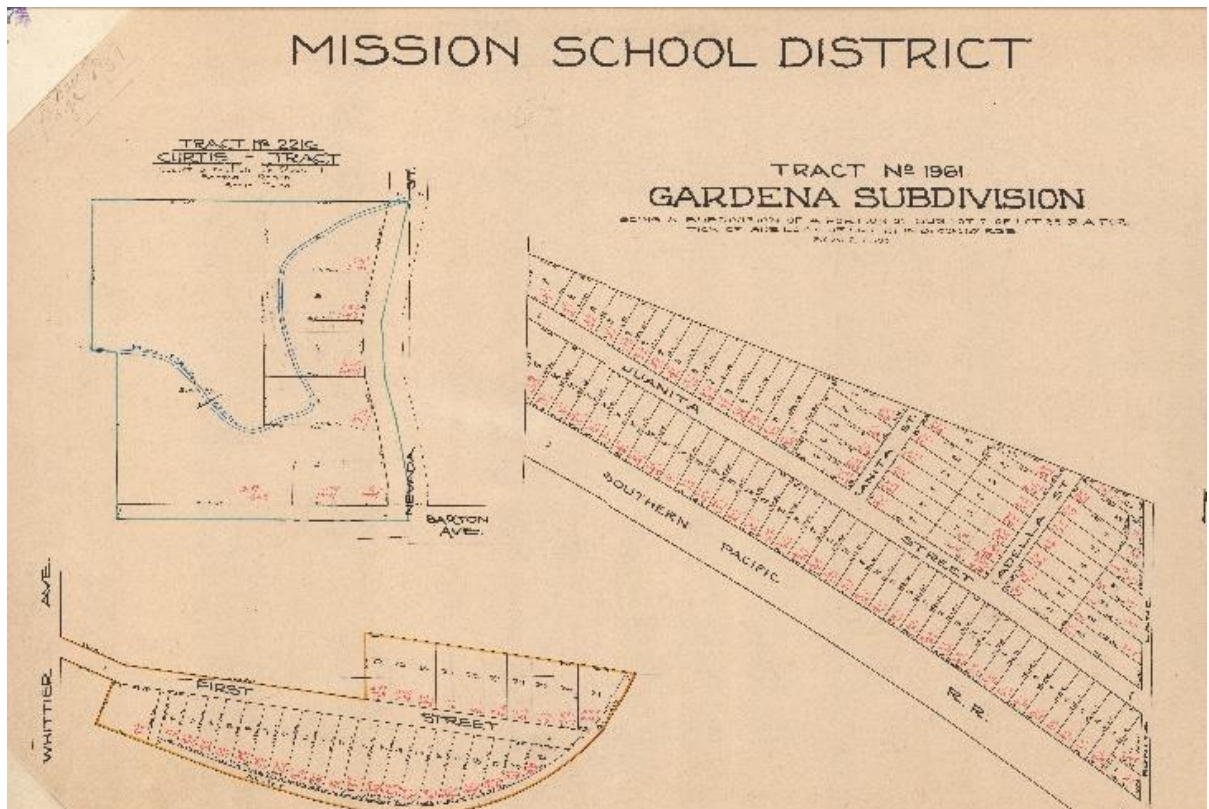


Figure 15: Mission School District Subdivision maps, focused on the Gardena and Bryn Mawr Tract Addition. (Courtesy San Bernardino County Historical Archives)

Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South, Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century America (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2006).

land they lived on, thereby establishing residency as well as land ownership.⁷⁴

Subdivisions are then an intermediary ground of surveillance and control but also potentially spaces of residency and homeownership. Subdivisions break the dichotomy found in the literature as expressed by García: “These communities outside the grower-owned housing projects developed into the spiritual and cultural centers of Mexican immigrant life. Workers living in the company housing on the west side formed communal bonds of their own...”⁷⁵ Most analyses, like García’s, see the Mexican community as either within or outside of white control. Within the Bryn Mawr subdivisions, the lines of control and ownership were more flexible as Mexicans became a part of the citrus country town with access to residency and land ownership but simultaneously experienced white attempts to control and regulate their behavior within these spaces.

⁷⁴ Genevieve Carpio, discusses the dangers of living in company towns and explores company town land ownership patterns in her third chapter “From Mexican Settlers to Mexican Birds of Passage: Relational Racial Formation, Citrus Labor, and Immigration Policy” Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*.

⁷⁵ García, *A World of Its Own*, 71.

In 1925 the Gardena Subdivision was created. The Gardena Subdivision was

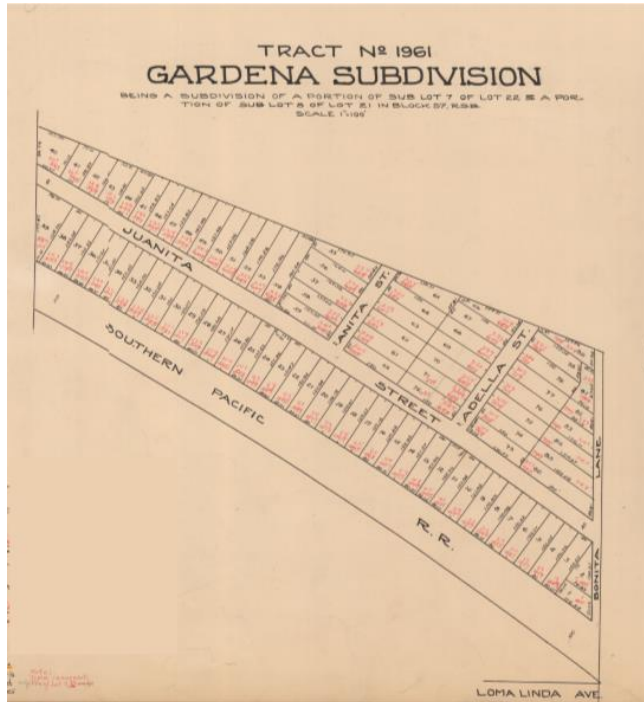


Figure 16: Gardena Subdivision map in county assessor records. (San Bernardino County Historical Archives)

created by Thomas and Gertrude Butler and divided the space north of Barton Road and east of the railroad tracks into 86 small lots. The subdivision is roughly equivalent to the “West Bryn Mawr Camp” (made up of the Cole and Frink camps) listed in the 1920 census. The Butlers were relatively new landowners in the area during the 1920s where they tried to grow stone fruits.⁷⁶ After creating the subdivision the Butler’s

sold the tract to grove and packinghouse owner C.A. Puffer who they had business dealings with before.⁷⁷ Puffer then sold it to Lenora Bernice (Bahr) Paxton a member of the extended Frink family, who previously lived next to the Requejo family.⁷⁸ With

⁷⁶ A small advertisement declared that the Butlers were giving out free peaches. “Fruits and Vegetables Add,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, August 21, 1924.

⁷⁷ A records listing in the newspaper indicates Butler had bought land from C.A. Puffer previously, most-likely land that he later sold back to Puffer after subdividing it. “Official Records,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, May 29, 1920.

⁷⁸ The story of the Gardena Subdivision land transfer indicates some of the inner workings of the close-knit Bryn Mawr country town. It seems that upon arriving in the area the Butlers came in conflict with the longstanding Frink family. A newspaper article indicates that the Butlers were attempting to sue couple William (Dent) Paxton and Lenora Bernice Paxton and Lenora’s mother Lizzy (Frink) Bahr. The dispute was over the family’s attempts to lock the road to the Butler’s home. It seems like these disagreements rattled the Butlers so much that they sold their lands in Bryn Mawr and moved to Etiwanda, California. What is interesting is that C.A. Puffer sold the land the Butlers owned to Lenora Bernice Paxton in 1927. In the end it seems the extended Frink family got what they wanted. “Court Fight Begun Over Road Closing,”

Bernice’s ownership of the tract, the land was once again coded as “Frink” labor land. She would remain the “Landlady of Juanita Street” until she died in 1973.⁷⁹ In 1927, according to San Bernardino County Accession Records, Lenora Bernice Paxton, only 23 at the time, purchased all the lots except for lots 78, 79, and 84. Lots 78 and 79 were owned by Miguel Martinez and lot 84 was owned by M. Ramirez. Only two Mexican families owned their homes in the subdivision and homeownership rates would not pick up to 1910 levels until the 1930s, which will be discussed in chapter 5.

Gardena was not the only subdivision, a year later a new subdivision was created in what was before known in the 1920 census as the “East Bryn Mawr Camp.” The Bryn

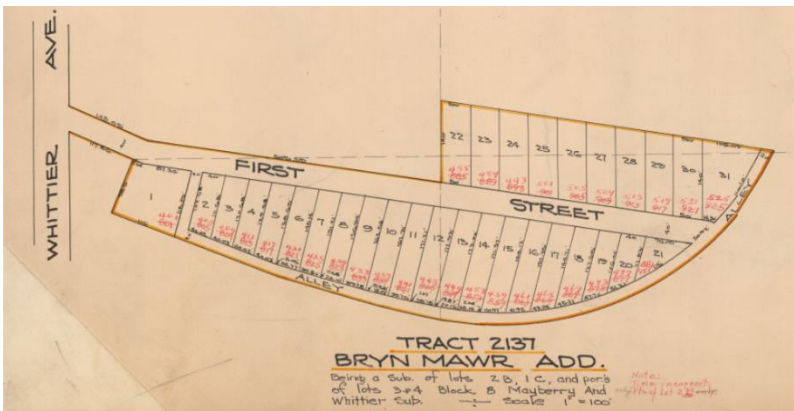


Figure 17: Bryn Mawr Tract Addition map in county assessor records. (San Bernardino County Historical Archives)

Mawr Addition, tract no. 2137, was created by packinghouse owner Allen Break in June of 1926. The Bryn Mawr Addition created 31 lots of various sizes. In addition to the creation

of the space itself, “Small cabins had been built along the railroad tracks to accommodate the Mexican fruit pickers and their families.” These tracts were sold to the residents by

The San Bernardino County Sun, October 9, 1925; “Reality Transfers,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, September 22, 1926; “Thomas F. Butler, Etiwanda,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, August 16, 1973; Erwin Hein, “Barton Road Fill Buries Historic Bryn Mawr Sites,” *The Redlands Daily Facts*, January 1, 1973, Newspapers.com.

⁷⁹ Hein, “Barton Road Fill Buries Historic Bryn Mawr Sites.”

Break for \$200 each.⁸⁰ Creating housing was a popular Americanization tactic at the time, borrowing from company town strategies. Don Mitchell traces how the creation of company housing was linked to labor unrest, “Mexican agricultural housing schemes were thus seen by many growers (and certainly by CCIH) as part of a program of "Americanization" designed to create an appropriate and docile labor supply.”⁸¹ In the Bryn Mawr context, lots within the subdivision, once purchased by Mexican residents, belonged to them and not to any company. These homes, while not company housing, at first achieved similar results: to maintain a resident labor force and to make Mexican residency more acceptable to the non-grove owning white population by aligning Mexican space with concepts of middle-class domesticity and homeownership.

The first Mexican landowner in the Bryn Mawr Tract was Esilda Martinez, who bought lots four and five in 1926. Besides the Martinez plot, only one other lot was purchased outright. Lot one of the subdivision was owned by the Bryn Mawr Protective Association, the prominent citrus cooperative organization in Bryn Mawr. Members of the organization, all citrus growers, came together to finance packinghouses, standardize fruit sizes, and as Hartig notes, “pool their fruit for market.”⁸² In lot one of the

⁸⁰ This knowledge comes from Fred Ramos of Bryn Mawr who informed Peggy Christian for her work. Christian, Peggy, *Historic San Timoteo Canyon: A Pictorial Tour, Myths and Legends*, 22.

⁸¹ Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, 100.

⁸² Hartig describes the early local cooperative structure well: “What had begun in Riverside with the structuring of a district exchange acting as a clearinghouse with regard to market information, bolstered by affiliated associations for fruit packing, soon gained momentum across the growing region. More growers formed local associations, built packinghouses, started to standardize fruit sizes, hire professional managers, and pool their fruit for market. The shape of the CFGE as it evolved in the 1890s and early 1900s could perhaps best be described as a representational hierarchy, with the individual growers forming local packing associations, with the associations gathered into to [sic] districts, with each district appointing a director to the Board of the Exchange.” Hartig, “Citrus Growers and the Construction of the Southern California Landscape, 1880–1940,” 82.

subdivision, the cooperative coalition of citrus growers owned space and used it to store large drums of oil used for lighting smudge pots.⁸³ Apart from the environmental hazard of living next to two-story oil drums, their placement shows how these subdivided spaces were viewed within the citrus country town space. The oil drums were necessary tools of the industry that needed to exist to support the citrus country town and were stored in a designated area. The Mexican community was viewed in a similar way, as necessary tools that needed to be stored and managed appropriately by the grower community.

Further management of the community was possible within the new subdivisions. The land was demarcated into orderly plots. A defined gridded layout facilitated record-keeping at the county level, through accession records, and at the local level through the landowner's personal records. Mexican community members who rented a lot were kept track of by their landlords. The relative anonymity that existed in the old "Mexican Town," in which the police were sometimes unable to pinpoint perpetrators of supposed crimes, like marijuana cultivation, was not possible in an orderly subdivision where the names and residences of the community were carefully cataloged by citrus country town elite. Each family had their delineated space allowing for easier individual criminalization and surveillance. The community no longer existed as an unmanageable horde, as white anxieties had feared. Instead, the community was kept under close watch by the citrus country town elite and was carefully cataloged and managed. Subdivisions

⁸³ Smudge pots or orchard heaters were devices used warm the groves when winter temperatures threatened to freeze the orange crop. The pots were filled with oil and then lit billowing out flames as well as thick black smoke which blanketed the groves and nearby homes.

organized and produced a new type of space, a space of heightened control through containment and recordkeeping.

Subdividing the land subverted Mexican ownership of their homes, demarcating who was the owner not just of the home but of the land itself. Most Mexican space was therefore owned by whites, who could exercise the control of an employer, landlord, and community leader simultaneously. The existence of these subdivided neighborhoods created the appearance of white control over the entirety of Mexican space which helped the area fit into the citrus country town mold of respectability. While subdivisions did serve in many ways to limit the community's independence and further tie them to the control of citrus country town elites, it also granted them a limited belonging to previously white space, something the community would mobilize in the coming decades.

The attempt to transform the "Mexican Camp" into neatly ordered subdivisions sought to create a Progressivist sense of order, respectability, and whiteness. In so doing growers sought to control the Mexican workers but also to illustrate that control to other community members who frowned upon the existence of foreign laborers in the area. Part of illustrating control was to publicize and "exhibit" it. The main vehicle for exhibiting control at a regional scale was through the press.

Publicizing Control: *El Sol* Newspaper

Residents in Bryn Mawr had access to two newspapers that covered the activities of the region, the more local *Redlands Daily Facts*, and the regional *The San Bernardino County Sun*. Both of these newspapers replicated the country town social system by heavily promoting the citrus industry, focusing on and elevating the lives of white elites, and creating a wider imagined community of those within the country town social system. As a result, when Mexican and Mexican Americans are mentioned in the 1900s-1920s press, it is primarily concerning policing or Americanization. Both policing and Americanization initiatives were meant to illustrate control; policing as physical and legal control over Mexican bodies, and Americanization efforts that sought to control mind and action. Americanization was the process of teaching Mexicans proper American values and therefore comportment, sometimes also referred to by the newspapers as “civilizing” the population. The exhibition and publicizing of policing and processes of Americanization became popular in the 1910s and 20s.

An example of the exhibition of police control can be seen in the previously noted instance of the policing of Bryn Mawr recreational activities. Following the previously quoted portion of the *Redlands Daily Facts* newspaper article detailing the police raid to rid the Mexican community of marijuana are these telling sentences:

The Cholos of this state attempts to grow it by stealth, but the officers are vigilant and not much ever comes to maturity. Constable Rivera brought some fine specimens to this office for exhibition. All plants found were destroyed.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ “Mourning Among Junction Cholos.”

At first, the article seems to be completely contradictory: that none of the marijuana ever “comes to maturity” but that Rivera was able to bring “some fine specimens” to his office. Why would Rivera want to display the marijuana when it would serve as evidence that some plants did in fact come to maturity? Because the plants were symbolic of police, and therefore white, control over the community. Rather than destroy all of the crops at the site, Rivera chose to bring the plants back to his office. Confiscating the plants allowed him to use them for exhibition. The newspaper’s use of the term “specimen” recalls a particular mode of museum and fair display. Those who came to Rivera’s office would be symbolically participating in the control of Mexican space and action while Rivera displayed the plants as an “object lesson” to attest to his abilities. It was not enough to remove the plants. Their removal needed to be a public action, a message to the white community that methods of policing and control were underway and effective.

While newspapers continued to publish stories of policing, the mid-1920s saw the emergence of a new method of ideological control: Spanish language media created specifically for Americanization, and therefore “civilizing,” purposes. The San Bernardino newspaper *El Sol de San Bernardino* (*El Sol*) was first launched on January 29th, 1926, and as far as the records indicate, *El Sol* was the first regional Inland Empire newspaper written in Spanish. The first editor of *El Sol* was Roberto Isaias, who previously worked for *El Eco*, a Spanish newspaper in Los Angeles.”⁸⁵ *El Sol* was owned

⁸⁵ “Announcement,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, January 24, 1926, Newspapers.com.

by the Sun Company which owned the main English language newspaper in the region *The San Bernardino County Sun* as well as the *Evening Telegram* alongside an engraving company, advertising service, printing house, color print company, and investment company. *El Sol* was conceived of by white newspaper men including president of the Sun Company Robert. C. Harbison. Unfortunately, *El Sol* was not archived and only a few clippings exist. As a result, much of the following analysis relies on mentions of the newspaper in its parent publication, *The San Bernardino County Sun*. While the coverage is limiting it does allow for an analysis of how the white community conceived of *El Sol* and its purpose.⁸⁶

The initial purpose of *El Sol* was multifaceted. It was, of course, a business venture created to expand the paper's readership and possibly advertisement revenues, but perhaps most importantly it was advertised as a means to educate and Americanize the Mexican population. The paper's targeted audience was Mexican community members. It was hoped that *El Sol* could narrate white, Protestant, rural values to the Spanish-speaking community and by doing so reform the community. These values included, "temperance, purity, respect of the marriage relation, industry, home keeping, good citizenship and service to the community."⁸⁷ These same values were put forward in *The San Bernardino County Sun* due to the views of the editors, writers, and heads of the corporation. President and Editor Robert C. Harbison, for example unsuccessfully ran for

⁸⁶ I had not found any clippings from *El Sol* until the summer of 2020 after my great uncle Ruben Colunga passed away and, in his belongings, I found records kept by my great grandmother Victoria Colunga of Colton. While these are the only clippings I have found, I hope that other family archives may contain more.

⁸⁷ "Work Among Mexicans."

U.S. Congress in 1916 on the Republican ticket on the platform of temperance and served on the board of directors for the National Orange Show and San Bernardino Chamber of Commerce.⁸⁸ *The San Bernardino County Sun* focused on upholding the citrus country town ethos, the new Spanish language newspaper owned and created by the Sun Company would seek to do the same. The name *El Sol* translates to “The Sun.” *El Sol* then becomes a Spanish copy of *The San Bernardino County Sun* displaying the links between the two papers and their intertwined motives.

The initial announcement of the launch of *El Sol* is written in English and aimed at San Bernardino County’s white residents. It states that the paper, which is to be distributed for free to “every Spanish and Mexican home in the San Bernardino trading area,” will cultivate “the best interests of the Mexican people, will further a program of Americanization among them, and promote better citizenship, better health and sanitation conditions...”⁸⁹ The *El Sol* advert simultaneously acknowledges white concerns and fears regarding citizenship and sanitation (which were a threat to the citrus labor system) and provides a simple solution, reading *El Sol*. The goal of “teaching” and “informing” the

⁸⁸ Harbison, according to his glowing obituaries embodied the ideal country life leader, Harry Chandler noted, “His effective battle for industrial freedom and for other worthy movements has earned the sincere appreciation of our citizenry.” J. R. Hitchcock general manager of the Santa Fe railroad wrote, “San Bernardino has lost an outstanding citizen, the Santa Fe a true friend and the newspaper fraternity one of this foremost analysis.” William Guthrie a San Bernardino authority lamented that “The community has lost its foremost citizen. For more than 40 years, he has stood as the leader of this community for all that was good and against the evils of the open saloon, gambling and corruption.” “Strong Prohibition Endorsement for Harbison Vote of Party Members Urged in His Behalf,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, October 27, 1916, Newspapers.com; “Illness of Year’s Duration Is Fatal to R.C. Harbison, Editor Of The Sun for Past 43 Years,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, October 22, 1937, Newspapers.com; “Scores of Friends Throughout City, State Join in Voicing of Tribute to Harbison’s Career,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, October 22, 1937, Newspapers.com.

⁸⁹ “Announcement.”

Mexican community about citizenship and sanitation stand out as common refrains among educators and social club members at the time.⁹⁰ As Natalia Molina notes in her work, "Public health officials viewed Mexicans and their "backward" culture as antithetical to their efforts to make Los Angeles a "modern" city. They launched Americanization programs in hopes that assimilation would eliminate Mexicans as an obstacle to progress."⁹¹ While Molina focuses on Los Angeles, the notion of a dangerous and contaminated Mexican community was a common refrain expressed by Southern California reformers.

However, the *El Sol* advertisement frames these issues as temporary. The goal of the paper is not simply to lament the perceived "issues" with the Mexican community but to resolve them through correct edification. The paper is poised as a solution to the "amusement problem of the Mexicans" by "furnish[ing] them with amusement that will at the same time edify and instruct."⁹² By referencing common white fears, *El Sol* positions itself as a way to clear a path through the Mexican "obstacle to progress." The goal of the paper is to reform the local community, much in the same way that the creation of subdivisions was meant to improve the image of the "Mexican Town." Subdivisions carved out specific controlled space for Mexicans in Bryn Mawr. *El Sol*, at least in how it is presented to a white audience, attempts to do the same, to recreate *The*

⁹⁰ For an outstanding analysis of public health concerns and the Mexican community see Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens?*

⁹¹ Molina, 20.

⁹² "Work Among Mexicans."

San Bernardino County Sun and its citrus country town ethos, but for the Mexican community.

In celebration of *El Sol*'s one-year anniversary, a self-congratulatory article publicizes the "success" of the paper in reforming the Mexican community at large. The article reflects on *El Sol* as an "experiment" that successfully infiltrated "more than 5,000 Mexican homes weekly."⁹³ The newspaper's accomplishments are not just measured in readers but in influence as the article claims that all who are associated with the paper have "observed its influence among the Mexican population of San Bernardino County."⁹⁴ The Mexican community is presented as easily influenced, as willing receivers of white guidance. *El Sol* claims not just to have influenced, but to have miraculously reformed the Mexican community. According to the article and the testimony of Chief of Police W.H. Baldwin, School Superintendent C.R. Holbrook, and the Director of Child Welfare in San Bernardino Schools Hollis P. Allen, "*El Sol* has pronounced influence in decreasing crime among the Mexicans and increasing attendance in the schools."⁹⁵ This statement is presented as supporting evidence to the Sun Company's first claim that the paper would serve as a means to further Americanization work. How exactly a weekly newspaper achieved such feats is not elaborated on. Despite

⁹³ "El Sol, Spanish Language Newspaper Is Year Old," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, January 29, 1927, Newspapers.com.

⁹⁴ "El Sol, Spanish Language Newspaper Is Year Old."

⁹⁵ "El Sol, Spanish Language Newspaper Is Year Old." However, only three years later repatriation would take over the narrative of the "Mexican Problem" and *The San Bernardino County Sun* began to publish articles celebrating the lack of school attendance as evidence of successful repatriation. "Mexican Schools Show Decrease." *The San Bernardino County Sun*. September 20, 1932. Newspapers.com. and "First School Week Ends With 8,535 Students on Rosters Throughout City." *The San Bernardino County Sun*. September 24, 1932. Newspapers.com. It seems likely that the downfall of the paper had much to do with the shift in interests which accompanied the Great Depression.

the lack of explanation, the article relies on the use of expert testimony from Baldwin, Holbrook, and Allen and cites their authority within the community to prove the impact the newspaper had upon its Mexican readers.

Americanization was not just socially motivated, it also had economic benefits. In the initial announcement of *El Sol*, the paper is described as “serving a medium for local merchants to reach this large class of residents.”⁹⁶ The Mexican community is displayed as a source of further financial enrichment for the white community. Americanization justified the presence of Mexican communities and once these communities were allowed to stay, they could be exploited for their labor, as well as, their buying power. The second advertisement for *El Sol* in the white *The San Bernardino County Sun* speaks to the economic motive directly. The advertisement states that “The Gate is Open to You” and presents advertising to the Mexican community as a means in which to earn “a few thousand dollars more every year.”⁹⁷ The advertisement depicts an ornate wrought-iron gate with a new car in the driveway. At the end of the driveway is a three-story craftsman house surrounded by trees. The advertisement promises the genteel California dream of opulence and wealth built from economic engagement with a reformed Mexican community. However, economic engagement does not mean associating directly with Mexican people, the advertisement’s depiction of large gates represents filigreed securitization. The citrus country town entrepreneur who pockets money from the Mexican consumer can still remain spatially separated from the perceived threat of the

⁹⁶ “Announcement.”

⁹⁷ “The Gate Is Open to You,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, February 21, 1926, Newspapers.com.

Mexican community. The advertisement asserts that the “Mexican population is extremely valuable because of its large collective buying power.”⁹⁸ The gate will open if one is willing to tap into and extract wealth from the growing Mexican population. In the pursuit of profit, we see the acknowledgment of the power of the Mexican community and specifically the place of the Mexican consumers within the economy of the country town.

From adverts and articles printed in *The San Bernardino County Sun*, we know that *El Sol* under the direction of Roberto Isaias continued until the winter of 1929; after that, there is a gap of seven years when *El Sol* resurfaces under the leadership of Eugenio Nogueras in 1936. The *El Sol* newspaper was presented to the white community as a solution to the Mexican presence in white rural space. *El Sol* proposed that Mexican American market dollars could be captured by white businesses, thereby taking back what capital had been given in wages. By promising and claiming to have successfully Americanized the Mexican population via Spanish language press *The San Bernardino County Sun* publicized white control and as they stated, “influence” over the regional Mexican community. By positioning *El Sol* as a forum to educate the Mexican community on tenets of proper American life they helped justify the community’s presence in the area and allay anti-immigration sentiment.

⁹⁸ “The Gate Is Open to You.”

Conclusion

In the first few decades of the twentieth century, growers' "need" for an exploitable, residential, labor force overcame their desire to uphold a vision of white rural utopia. In experiencing the effects of immigration exclusions from Asia, they worked to ensure similar exclusions would not occur to the now integral immigrants from America's southern border. As a result, the Mexican community became an integral part of the citrus country town. Policing, subdivision creation, and the exhibition of white control and influence over these communities helped to justify the presence of Mexican workers in Inland Empire citrus communities. However, as I will illustrate in subsequent chapters, control was not as far-reaching as *The San Bernardino County Sun* would have white readers believe. Making space within the citrus country town for their Mexican workers allowed for the Mexican community's continued labor exploitation on one hand, but on the other, it provided the community, especially in the 1930s, with an increased claim to white space and white privileges, as I will discuss in chapter 5.

In 1925 the *Redlands Daily Facts* ran an editorial acknowledging the area's reliance on Mexican labor. "We need the Mexican people here. Already they are furnishing the bulk of our agricultural labor."⁹⁹ This was the inescapable truth. Mexicans must have a place, however subordinate, within the country town social system because they were integral to the industry. By the mid-1920s the racialized labor structure was fully entrenched, and Mexican communities continued to grow as families grew and

⁹⁹ "Teaching the Mexicans to Work," *The Redlands Daily Facts*, December 26, 1925.

settled into the year-round labor of the citrus industry. As a new generation of Mexican American children was born, white anxieties and concerns focused on them. The new generation needed to remain in a subordinate position to allow for continued labor exploitation. The 1925 editorial continues, “But if they are to occupy the most useful place among us, the girls and boys should be taught that labor suited to them as most desirable, for them or as well for us.”¹⁰⁰ From the perspective of white community leaders, Mexican families could stay as long as they understood their place and remained useful to the industry. From these anxieties grew the “need” for separate educational institutions for white and Mexican children. 1911, saw the opening of the Bryn Mawr Mexican School to regulate a new generation of Mexican children. The school maintained a separation between white and Mexican residents but also served as a means to control and Americanize the growing population of American citizens of Mexican ancestry. The practices of Americanization education and determining the correct way to educate Mexican and Mexican American children became a central priority; locally, regionally, and statewide. The next chapter will trace the emergence of Mexican education in Southern California and its connections to Progressive Era conceptions of rurality.

¹⁰⁰ “Teaching the Mexicans to Work.”

CHAPTER 3: Designing the “Rural School Problem”

Rurality, Race, and the Expansion of Educational Bureaucracy in California, 1910-1919

Mild Mexicans

Pupil: “Teacher, does God love the Mexicans?”

Teacher: “Why, of course dear.”

Pupil: “Anyway, I bet they make him nervous”¹

This short, and supposedly humorous, quip published in the Los Angeles Normal School student newspaper the *Normal Outlook*, illustrates growing anxieties about the education of Mexican students. While the teacher reassures the pupil as to the extent of “God’s love” the pupil’s fears are unresolved. But what about Mexicans in particular provoked such discomfort and anxiety in the classroom? In this chapter, I will argue that the anxieties of white educators stemmed from Mexican pupils’ dual categorization as “rural” and “foreign” students, which made them a dual threat to white middle-class America. At a time of growing educational reform in both “rural” and “foreign” subsets of education, educators and administrators mobilized the growing California state bureaucracy to control the education of Mexican students.

In my first chapter, I introduce the manner in which rurality was constructed in the Inland Empire, and then in chapter 2, I demonstrate the centrality of Mexican labor

¹ “Mild Mexicans” was a part of the “pinfeathers” section of the newspaper filled with assorted small “silly” stories and quips from the classroom. Other newspapers around the time, for example the *Santa Rosa Republican* included a “Pin-Feathers” section comprised of a compilation of small undeveloped stories. The term was also used to refer to youth or inexperience. “Mild Mexicans,” *The Normal Outlook*, October 16, 1914, Volume V. No. 4 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 5, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

within this rural space. This chapter brings these two threads together, as I analyze the ways in which educators attempted to address the fact that rural space was occupied by non-white residents. This chapter illustrates how teachers and administrators perceived rural space to be “foreign” in nature and how the state educational bureaucracy expanded its power to reform the rural students they coded as “foreign.” Through their work, education professionals mapped race onto rural space to create, what I term, the issue of *foreign rurality* by combining the national concern over rural schools with local concerns over race.²

The issue of foreign rurality tied a racial “foreignness” to a particular geography while creating a particular categorization of “Mexican” as a perpetual foreigner; as rural, poor, and in need of uplift and Americanization.³ Through teacher training and state and county Progressive-style education reform, teachers and administrators at the local and state levels proposed solutions including Americanization and segregated community schools. “Americanization” names a particular educational ideology in which immigrant populations are taught to embody American language, culture, and values at the expense of their own.⁴ Segregation, and particularly, Americanization were mobilized not only

² In this chapter I present the issue of foreign rurality only in the context of education policy. The issue of foreign rurality, however, upon further research, may also bear out in public health and other policy issues.

³ I am informed by geographer Don Mitchell’s conceptions of geography. “In a like manner, scholars and critics concerned, for example, with the constitution of the body, or with the making of “race,” understand, as perhaps never before, that these two have geographies, that they are impossible without them. The work of society is geographical.” Assessing the educational construction of rural space as foreign space is part and parcel to the shaping of racialized landscapes which I trace in chapters 1 and 2. Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, 3.

⁴ González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 30. “Americanization was the practical form of the general sociological theory of assimilation, and assimilation was the specific application of the general theory of the organic society to the problem of immigrants and ethnicity in modern industrial societies.”

locally but through a systematic expansion of the state educational bureaucracy as the Progressive state boasted it could solve both California's "foreign" and rural problems.

Historiography and Organization

Thus far in the historiography, issues of Progressive Era rural education reform and interventions in "foreign" education have not been discussed in tandem. Due to these disciplinary divisions, intersections between rurality and race have not been thoroughly explored. Instead, the historiography has been divided into four separate areas. The first is Progressive Era urban Americanization processes. As many scholars have demonstrated, in the United States, there was a nationwide Americanization effort to assimilate all immigrants. These efforts formed the education subfield referred to as "foreign" or "immigrant" education focused on the education of immigrant communities.⁵ The second strand of literature highlights how race informed one's status as "foreign." In educator circles, children were categorized as "foreign" primarily according to their perceived racial status. As Kurashige and Molina have shown, both Asians and Mexicans in California have been continually racialized as "foreign" or

⁵ Often "immigrant education" was viewed as an urban problem. "In the cities problem of skyrocketing enrollments were compounded by a host of other issues. In school buildings badly lighted, poorly heated, frequently unsanitary, and bursting at the seams, young immigrants from a dozen different counties swelled the tide of newly arriving farm children." Cremin, *The Transformation of the School; Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957.*, 21 See also: Christina A. Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States: Immigrant Social Welfare Policy, Citizenship, and National Identity in the United States, 1908-1929* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009), <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/19492>; Robert F. Zeidel, *Immigrants, Progressives, and Exclusion Politics: The Dillingham Commission, 1900-1927* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004); Shelton Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People": The Progressive Movement, the Class Problem, and the Origins of Modern Liberalism*, *The Working Class in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006); Max Shulman and J. Chris Westgate, *Performing the Progressive Era: Immigration, Urban Life, and Nationalism on Stage*, *Studies in Theatre History and Culture* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2019).

“alien” regardless of their immigration status.⁶ These processes of racialization lead historian Gilbert González to remark that Mexicans’ experiences with Americanization were often very different than their European counterparts.⁷ While some research focuses on Mexicans and Asians in rural space, rurality does not play a large part in the analysis.⁸ The third category consists of research on rural educational reform based on Progressive reform and country life ideals, which when focusing on race, tends to focus on the black/white binary.⁹

⁶ Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race*; Kurashige, “The Many Facets of Brown”; Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens?*

⁷ Gilbert González argues, “First, the Americanization of the Mexican community occurred in a legally segregated system. Secondly, it was both rural and urban, as contrasted with the European experience, which was overwhelmingly urban. Thirdly, it was heavily influenced by the regional agricultural economy, which retarded a ‘natural’ assimilation process. Finally, immigrants from Mexico could not escape the effects of the economic and political relationship between an advanced capitalist nation, the United States and a semi capitalist, semifeudal nation, Mexico, the latter increasingly under the political and economic sway for the United States.” González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 31. Much of the literature on Americanization particularly about European immigrants but even with Mexican immigrants tends to focus on urban rather than rural conditions.

⁸ It was Gilbert González in *Labor and Community* who noted the tendency to view Mexican and Mexican American history as tied with urban history, “The unsupported and unchallenged notion that Chicanos have been an urban group either throughout the twentieth century, or at least since 1930, requires serious reevaluation before adequate nationwide comparative ethnic community studies can be realized.” (3) Since this call scholars have noted the rural nature of Mexican communities in the first half of the twentieth century but have not investigated how national rural policies affected these spaces. González discusses the education of Mexican children living in rural “citrus villages.” He discusses reasoning for segregation, as well as a general overview of the students’ substandard education experience. He does not however, bring in contemporary debates on rural education reform. Gilbert G. González, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-1950*, Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Centennial Series (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994). Scholars dealing with rural Mexican communities in California include: González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*; González, *Labor and Community*, 1994; Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*; García, *A World of Its Own*.

⁹ Reynolds, *There Goes the Neighborhood Rural School Consolidation at the Grass Roots in Early Twentieth-Century Iowa*; Tracy L. Steffes, “Solving the ‘Rural School Problem’: New State Aid, Standards, and Supervision of Local Schools, 1900-1933,” *History of Education Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (2008): 181–220; Jennifer V. Opager Baughn, “A Modern School Plant: Rural Consolidated Schools in Mississippi, 1910–1955,” *Buildings & Landscapes: Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum* 19, no. 1 (2012): 43–72, <https://doi.org/10.5749/buildland.19.1.0043>; Cremin, *The Transformation of the School; Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957*.

The fourth strand of literature is on Mexican school segregation. Many scholars have worked to thoroughly prove that while not supported by law in California, Mexican school segregation was pervasive across the state. The strengths of existing studies on Mexican school segregation lie in assessments of Mexican segregation and Americanization policies in the 1920s and 1930s. As scholars have proved, stated justifications for segregation included Mexican students perceived “inability” to speak English, Mexican children’s “inferior” abilities in the classroom, the lack of cleanliness among Mexican students (and other eugenic concerns), the white community’s desires for segregation, the benefits to Mexican children to be segregated, and Mexicans’ indigenous status.¹⁰ These reasonings were further bolstered by the use eugenic of IQ tests to “scientifically prove” the intellectual inferiority of Mexican children.¹¹ Further, scholars have shown that once implemented, Mexican education focused far more on vocational education rather than substantive education.¹² The historiography on the reasonings for segregation is robust, but because much of the literature has focused on the 1920s and

¹⁰ Some segregationists relied on racially categorizing Mexicans as “Indians” by claiming that they were primarily Mestizos. In 1930 California State Attorney General Webb declared that Mexicans were “Indians” and could be segregated under California law. For more see Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed*; González, *Labor and Community*, 1994; González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*; Nájera, *The Borderlands of Race*.

¹¹ For more on the use of testing to maintain segregation and “prove” Mexican intellectual inferiority see Chapter 3 “Intelligence Testing and the Mexican Child” in González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*; Martha Menchaca and Richard R. Valencia, “Anglo-Saxon Ideologies in the 1920s-1930s: Their Impact on the Segregation of Mexican Students in California,” *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (1990): 222–249; Chapter 5 “In Search of Efficiency” in Judith Rosenberg Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise: Politics and Reform in Los Angeles Schools, 1885-1941* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1992); David Torres-Rouff, “Becoming Mexican: Segregated Schools and Social Scientists in Southern California, 1913—1946,” *South Calif Quart* 94, no. 1 (2012): 91–127.

¹² It has been widely acknowledged in the literature that much of Mexican education was focused on providing students with vocational education in order to funnel them into low paying jobs. See González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*; García, *Strategies of Segregation*.

1930s and utilized more scholarly sources like master's theses and scientific studies justifying Mexican schools, scholars have missed some crucial administrative history, which ties Americanization to rural educational reform. My research, however, finds that segregated schooling was already a part of California's educational landscape in the 1910s. Studying the 1910s, as well as how teachers were trained to teach in segregated schools, provides new insights into patterns of school segregation.¹³ Scholars concur that by the close of the 1920s segregation was ubiquitous, but the field requires further analysis of the decades preceding the consolidation of segregationist practice.¹⁴ My research addresses some of these gaps in the scholarship on segregation and offers new avenues of analysis.

Each strand of literature provides part of the picture but connecting the rural problem to the "foreign" problem brings to light how the Progressive state used the issue of foreign rurality as an excuse to increase its power and bureaucracy to supervise the creation of a new generation of American citizens of foreign ancestry. Tracy Steffes noted in 2008, "Almost 20 years after David Tyack and Thomas James challenged historians of education to explore the 'Primeval Forest' of state government and law, it

¹³ González observed that "Consequently, many teaching colleges and universities created special courses for the effective instruction of Mexican children. The University of Southern California, the University of California, the University of Texas, and the Texas College of Arts and Industries, among others, offered courses for the preparation of teachers planning to work in areas with high Mexican enrollment." However he focuses on administrative level documents and masters theses which only give a partial glance at teacher preparation. González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 36.

¹⁴ As Torres-Rouff observed, "By 1928, segregation had become standard practice, and Mexican schools had become commonplace: sixty-four schools in southern California were 90-100 percent Mexican and Mexican American" Torres-Rouff, "Becoming Mexican," 91-92.

remains largely uncharted territory.”¹⁵ Steffes argues that there is a distinctive link between rural education reform and the expansion of national and state educational bureaucracy and calls for scholars to help identify these patterns of emergence. My research connecting state bureaucratic expansion and rural and foreign education in California brings to light the larger pattern of state control, which has been overlooked. In fact, many scholars of California Mexican school segregation have insisted on the local nature of school segregation.¹⁶ Gilbert González, a notable exception, does analyze the presence of the state within the context of segregation as well as the national and transnational nature of segregation policy but begins his analysis in the Postwar period.¹⁷ Connecting the rural problem to the foreign problem brings to light how the Progressive state used the issue of foreign rurality as an excuse to increase its power and bureaucracy

¹⁵ “Our narrative about schooling acknowledges the expansion of State Authority and growth of state bureaucracy but are remarkably vague and imprecise about the timing, nature, and processes by which the expansion occurred.” Steffes, “Solving the ‘Rural School Problem,’” 183.

¹⁶ For instance, according to Torres-Rouff, “Rather than aiming for state-level policy that would have called into question the validity of Mexican schools, they circumvented state law by restricting themselves to regular policy-making channels at the local level.” Torres-Rouff, “Becoming Mexican,” 93; Most recently, David García has focused on tracing “fraternal bonds, and business partnerships” among the “White architects” of Mexican school segregation deployed racial segregation through a process he calls mundane racism. David G. García, *Strategies of Segregation: Race, Residence, and the Struggle for Educational Equality, American Crossroads*; 47 (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2018), 3-4. He borrowed the term “White Architects” from William H. Watkins, *The White Architects of Black Education: Ideology and Power in America, 1865-1954* (Teachers College Press, 2001). For more see: García, *A World of Its Own*; Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed*.

¹⁷ He states that, “there were no laws that mandated the practice of segregation, educators did invoke the state power granted to school administration,” on linguistic and cultural grounds. While he acknowledges the presence of the state he does not examine how and why the state wielded such influence in the first half of the twentieth century. González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 2. See also Chapter 6 “Inter-American and Intercultural Education” in González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*. González also argues for assessing the national and transnational nature of segregation policy.

in order to supervise the creation of a new generation of American citizens of foreign ancestry.

This chapter will focus on connecting multiple strands of literature and primary source research. First, I focus on how the rural problem and the “foreign problem” were understood and confronted by teachers and administrators at the Los Angeles Normal School (LA Normal). I focus on the activities of the teachers college because the institution allows us to assess how teachers were being trained to interact in rural space and with rural people. As teachers worked to solve the “on the ground” realities of foreign rurality, their recommendations were then taken up by state administrators at a time when Hiram Johnson’s Progressive state government was at the peak of its power. Second, I illustrate how state-wide expansionary control efforts were exercised through rural school consolidation efforts, collaborations between the California Commission of Immigration and Housing (CCIH), and the expansion of the California Library system. State expansion would set the stage for the expansion of the educational bureaucracy in California as well as the proliferation of “Spanish” or “Mexican Schools” throughout the state.

To trace the racialization of rural Mexican students as foreign and the subsequent expansion of the California State Educational Bureaucracy to fix the issue of foreign rurality, I use a multi-scalar approach.¹⁸ Multi-scalar analysis utilizes varying scales or

¹⁸ California makes a good case study for studying issues with foreign rurality and state expansion due to its unique treatment of the problem and the state’s early interventions. As González notes, “California led the southwestern states in Americanization by establishing, in 1916, a Division of Immigrant Education within the Department of Education for the promotion, development, and improvement of Americanization

frames to create a multi-dimensional analysis. In using multi-scalar analysis, I zoom in and out from the individual to societal, from the local to the federal, from the object to the network.¹⁹ Multi-scalar analysis allows for an understanding of how conceptualizations of race are configured at these varying levels and coalesce in the everyday place-based realities experienced by generations of Mexican American residents in Bryn Mawr. By employing multi-scalar analysis, I can trace how national goals were applied to the Southern California context, particularly in Bryn Mawr. While many scholars have traced the patterns of segregation throughout the Southwest, I follow the lead of Jennifer Nájera who argues that “we should not take Mexican segregation for granted as a monolith that functioned in the same way throughout the U.S. Southwest.”²⁰ I switch between analyzing the local, regional, and state policies as a way to interrogate the realities of how administrators sought to address the issue of foreign rurality. In so doing my research opens space for an analysis of smaller overlooked districts and stories to allow for a more cohesive narrative of school segregation and foreign education policy.

programs.” The establishment of a separate office indicates the beginning of delineated state policy for dealing with “alien” education. González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 35.

¹⁹ The idea of multi-scalar analysis has been used in the social sciences, in particular Sociology, and is now being used within the history of science and Technopolitics. See for example: Thomas G. Andrews, *Killing for Coal: America’s Deadliest Labor War* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 2010); Nikhil Anand, *Hydraulic city: water and the infrastructures of citizenship in Mumbai*, 2017, <http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=4813518>; Nicole Starosielski, *The Undersea Network, Sign, Storage, Transmission* (Durham [North Carolina]: Duke University Press, 2015); Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).

²⁰ Nájera, *The Borderlands of Race*, 6. Many other canonical studies on Mexican school segregation focus on tracing larger patterns in the Southwest of particular note is Gilbert G. González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 7 (University of North Texas Press, 2013). He focuses on the Southwest excluding New Mexico. He pulled out large scale national trends as he states, “overwhelming pedagogical unanimity” whereas I seek to assess how national trends were implemented within specific local conditions. Another work dealing with the Southwest as a whole is Vicki L. Ruíz, “South by Southwest: Mexican Americans and Segregated Schooling, 1900-1950,” *OAH Magazine of History* 15, no. 2 (2001): 23–27

Part I. Creating the Problem of “Foreign Rurality”

The “Rural Problem:” Reforming Rural Education

The 1890s and 1910s saw growing national concern about rural education on the part of educators and politicians.²¹ Rural school education was the rural counterpart to the other Progressive reforms of the 1890s, which were occurring in the cities.²² Rural spaces were of additional concern to education reformers because of educational issues such as the lack of “proper” and “scientific” agricultural education, and existing conditions, such as one-room schoolhouses, out-of-date teaching materials, and under credentialed

²¹ "By 1908 both the rising pressure for rural-school reform and the heightening tempo of rural educational innovation had created an interested public extending far beyond the farmers and teachers directly involved...Sensitive to a fertile field in which Progressivism might work its uplifting influence, Theodore Roosevelt appointed a Commission on Country Life and charged it with gathering information and formulating recommendations for alleviating rural distress." Cremin, *The Transformation of the School; Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957.*, 82.

²²At the turn of the century, Progressive Era reforms in public education were gaining ground. Scholars of Progressive education have thoroughly noted the wide range of Progressivism in the schools. “First, the movement was marked from the very beginning by a pluralistic, frequently contradictory, character. The reader will search these pages in vain for any capsule definition of Progressive education. None exists, and none ever will; for throughout its history progressive education meant different things to different people, and these differences were only compounded by the remarkable diversity of American education.” Of particular focus was compulsory education. Compulsory education and the need to educate all children rich, poor, immigrant etc. spurred many of the Progressive reforms. "Compulsory schooling provided both the problem and the opportunity of the progressives; its very existence inexorably conditioned every attempt at educational innovation during the decades preceding World War I." Paranoia over the masses of urban residents and the introduction of Progressive protections for women and children, like child labor laws, meant that children were in need of a new occupation. Children’s new occupation was to be education, which spurred reforms in both city and country. In Judith Rosenberg Raftery’s analysis of Progressive Era reforms in Los Angeles schools, she notes that “No institution was more altered by these impulses than the public school. The persuasiveness of humanitarian Progressives and organizational Progressives was so intense, and their reforms so successfully imposed, that their influences have continued to affect schooling to this day.” Of the “intense” reforms were the implementation of kindergarten, penny lunches, health care, and after-hours playgrounds. Reformers sought to better manage education by enacting programmatic and policy changes. Raftery argues that of chief concern was increased professionalism in education, in other words, to run education efficiently like a business. The issue of school professionalization and links to Progressive Era education policy will be discussed further in the next chapter. For information about Progressive Education in Los Angeles see Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*. Cremin, x, 128; Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*, 14.

teachers. Perhaps most famously in 1909, President Roosevelt's Country Life Commission reported their findings to Congress, arguing for the necessity of school reform to reverse the decline of the countryside.²³ They lamented that "The very forces that have built up the city and town school have caused the neglect of the country school."²⁴ The commissioner's observations echoed and energized Progressive educators' growing concerns over the state of rural education in America.²⁵

The result was an increased focus on diagnosing and treating the "rural school problem" in America, educators' shorthand for the growing list of issues with rural education in comparison to urban schools. Rural school "problems" included a perceived lack of professional expertise, supervision, and effective categorization of pupils. Problems like the lack of educated teachers, lack of suitable supervisors, lack of teaching materials, and the small size of the schools were all identified as direct problems which, at first, seemed to have relatively simple solutions. Dual concern over education and rural

²³ As I discuss in chapter 1, "The Country Life Movement was the Progressive Era's response to the growing divide between rural and urban America. Progressives, while more well known for their urban reforms, were also deeply concerned with rural America... The movement came to the consensus that the country was a space in need of reform because it lacked what modern Americans needed. Country Lifers hoped to create a new "rural civilization" as Liberty H. Bailey, one of the lead commissioners, put it: "Rural civilization" was to be a rural space infused with modernist industrial "civilization," relying on industrial technology to re-shape rural space to reflect American modernity." While my first chapter focused on the creation of the country town in Inland Southern California, this chapter will focus on education reforms.

²⁴ L. H. Bailey et al., *Report of the Country Life Commission: Special Message from the President of the United States Transmitting the Report of the Country Life Commission*. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1906), 54.

²⁵ While the report of the Country Life Commission did not yield immediate legislative change, the ideas lived on in state and local reform movements. "State commissions patterned after the national model did continue the work, recruiting farmers in many communities for round-table discussions on rural life, and the educational idea of the national report did remain alive. Yet no legislation was immediately forthcoming. Yet the direct outcome of the report was prodigious." Cremin, *The Transformation of the School; Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957.*, 82.

space became widely understood as the “rural school problem.” Once the issue was identified and articulated many rushed to solve it.

One of the Country Life Movement’s primary solutions to the “rural problem” was through rural education reform. Reformers argued that the key to creating modern industrial rurality was to educate the young farmer on the tenets of proper agricultural practices and, perhaps more importantly, to teach them how to become a part of “industrial democracy.”²⁶ Just as rural land reformers sought to infuse industry and technology into the countryside, rural education reformers focused on providing rural residents with industrial knowledge. The movement’s initial focus was to include agricultural education in rural schools. Liberty Hyde Bailey argues passionately that “We must understand that the introduction of agriculture into the schools is not a concession to farming or farmers. It is a school subject by right.”²⁷ As the “experts” in rural conditions, Country Lifer’s imposed top-down dissemination of agricultural knowledge - from agricultural industrial technology to the use of new scientific research on agriculture. It was hoped that by disseminating modern and scientific agricultural techniques and

²⁶ Bailey, *The Country-Life Movement in the United States*, 57. In full Bailey states that: "We have been training our youth merely to be better farmers; this, of course, is the first thing to do, but the man is only half trained when this is done. What to do with the school, the church, the rural organizations, the combinations of trade, the highways, the architecture, the library, the beauty of the landscape, the country store, the rousing of a fine community helpfulness to take the place of the old selfish individualism, and a hundred other activities is enough to fire the imagination and to strengthen an arm of any young man or woman. The farmer is to contribute his share to the evolution of an industrial democracy."

²⁷ While Baily’s proposal to infuse agriculture into the curriculum at first appears to be democratic and a passionate plea for those in rural areas to learn about what students would find most valuable, it was another Progressive intervention meant to advance Progressive ideals, not necessarily those of the community. Altering the agricultural education curriculum in rural schools and infusing Country Life agricultural ideals was an attempt to subvert pre-existing agricultural technologies and knowledge production. For more see Chapter 2 in Reynolds, *There Goes the Neighborhood Rural School Consolidation at the Grass Roots in Early Twentieth-Century Iowa*. Bailey, 63.

processes that rural life and rural citizens could be properly managed, and thereby, transformed into industrious modern farmers.

While the rural school problem was taken up by teachers and administrators across the United States, regional processes of racialization caused divergences from the national movement. The first divergence between national and California county-specific rural education policy was based upon defining and identifying the rural student. In the national literature represented by the works of authors such as Bailey and Anderson, the rural pupil is in many ways the representative of the pastoral ideal. In his comparison between “town and country affairs,” Bailey states that “These people are steady, conservative, abiding by the law, and are to a greater extent than we recognize a controlling element in our social structure.”²⁸ Bailey’s insistence on the importance of the rural population as a modulating force of civilization illustrates an idealist outsider view. Within his idealistic view of rural space, the land is populated solely by conservative and steady citizens, who are assumed to be white and male.

Bailey and others believed that the only difference between rural and urban students was their surroundings, lack of opportunity, and detachment from urban amenities. Authors like Olly Jasper Kern expressed these assumptions about U.S. rural conditions. In his work *Among Country Schools*, Kern describes country students as “children living in the fields,” and as “fifty-cent boy[s].”²⁹ Kern is likely drawing from his own experiences as a country student in Illinois in the mid-1800s in depicting the

²⁸ Bailey, 16.

²⁹ Olly Jasper Kern, *Among Country Schools* (Ginn, 1906), 23.

rural student as a poor, working child who is also white.³⁰ In the national literature of the Country Life Movement, race is invisible, and invisibility presumes whiteness.³¹

While California did have rural students who were a part of the workforce and living in poverty, the majority of them did not embody the white American pastoral ideal held by many Country Life reformers at the national level. Despite hopes for a clear national “solution,” proposed reforms, such as rural school consolidation (the consolidation of schools to prevent one-room schoolhouses) and agricultural education for all, were undesirable in rural spaces in which a sizable percentage of rural pupils were not white.³² The citrus labor regime centered on access to a large number of racialized workers whom growers could exploit for their labor. In the San Bernardino Valley, Mexican families were an essential part of the burgeoning agribusiness regime. As a result, citrus country towns found themselves with a large population of Mexican children, who the citrus country town elite did not wish to train to be better farmers, as the national Country Life Movement assumed. Instead, growers focused on maintaining their cheap labor supply and expected that Mexican children would work in the groves after primary level education.

In rural spaces like Bryn Mawr, California educators saw the rise of large permanent communities of Mexican Americans and worked to solve the “rural problem”

³⁰ University of California Academic Senate, “1943-1945, University of California: In Memoriam - Olly Jasper Kern, Agricultural Education: Berkeley,” 1945 1943, Calisphere, <http://texts.cdlib.org/view?docId=hb696nb2rz&doc.view=frames&chunk.id=div00044&toc.depth=1&toc.id=>. In 1913 Kern became an assistant professor of Agricultural Education at the University of California.

³¹ Presumed whiteness also erased African American students, particularly in the South. For more on Progressive Era rural school reforms in Mississippi see Baughn, “A Modern School Plant.”

³² Cremin, *The Transformation of the School; Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957.*, x.

in their own racialized geography. The result was the creation of two tracks of rural education, one for the children of grower elites (and other white pupils) and one for Mexican students. Agricultural education in California was situated in spaces that Mexican and Mexican Americans did not have access to -- high schools and colleges.³³ Agricultural education became an upper-middle-class movement to maintain the grower elite class. A robust system of agricultural colleges such as the California Experiment Station at Riverside and Chaffy College's agricultural programs gave white male students training in industrial farming. Members of the citrus country town elite had reason to maintain their position, as González notes, "The Los Angeles school superintendent voiced a common complaint in a 1923 address to district principals. 'We have these [Mexican] immigrants to live with, and if we Americanize them, we can live with them...'"³⁴ What emerges are two tracks of rural education, one focusing on agricultural education for whites and one focusing on language and Americanization for Mexicans. Educating white students on agricultural pursuits was not a "problem" in Inland Southern California as elites worked diligently to create a robust agricultural education system. The "rural school problem" within public elementary schools in Southern California became the challenge of assimilating a foreign populace.³⁵ These students, racialized as

³³Due to many structural barriers, in particular economic exploitation, most Mexican children did not attend high school. As González recounts a Mexican high school graduate was a rarity, "When Isabel Martínez graduated from Fullerton High School in 1931, the *Placentia Courier* headlined 'the first student of Mexican parentage who has graduated from the high school.'" Even if students received a diploma, it was unlikely the degree would translate to any social or economic mobility.

González, *Labor and Community*, 1994, 111. Here González is quoting the *Placentia Courier* paper from June 12, 1931.

³⁴ González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 36.

³⁵ Historian Gilbert González, Judith Rosenberg Raftery and Gayle Gullett, among others, have noted the general impact of the Progressive Era on Mexican education, but have not discussed the Country Life

“foreign” and situated in rural space were seen as a double threat to white American industrial democracy.

Educators in California were becoming more invested in solving the rural school problem. As a result, more educators began to confront the realities of rural teaching in California. Their experiences did not align with the national narratives which presumed students’ whiteness. Therefore, they worked to create a new set of practices and theories which became critical in the solidification of the problem of foreign rurality and the eventual proliferation of segregated Mexican schools in California.

Reclassifying Rural Education at Los Angeles Normal School

Regional attempts to address the “rural school problem” played out at California educational institutions such as Los Angeles Normal School (LA Normal).³⁶ LA Normal was part of the California State Normal School system of teaching colleges, and one of two located in Southern California. The aim of “normal schools,” also called “teacher training colleges,” was to transform high school graduates into educators for the public schools of the state by teaching them pedagogical and curricular “norms.” In the mid-1910s LA Normal began to focus more heavily on rural education. Through the influence

Movement specifically. González notes that “Progressive educational reforms operated on two levels. On the level of culture as shared information, Progressives aimed at inculcating a common culture that would bind together the various classes. On the level of the educational process, they sought effective training of the individual as a producer. The reforms instituted to these ends included testing, tracking, curriculum differentiation (i.e., vocational education vs. courses for the “gifted”), Americanization, and segregation.” Gilbert G. González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 7 (University of North Texas Press, 2013), 8.

³⁶ Kern offered to give a lecture to LA Normal School in 1915. It is unclear from the records whether he gave the presentation or not. O. J. Kern, “Stereoptican Lectures by O.J. Kern,” 1915, Rec Ser 1, State Normal Schol: B4 F 14, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

of educators like Elizabeth Keppie, teachers came to view rural space as “foreign” space. Administrators would then produce teachers who would take these ideas and theories about rural and Americanization education into local classrooms throughout Southern California, including the Inland Empire.

Starting in 1913, LA Normal, which would later become a part of the University of California, Los Angeles, was drawing up plans for rural education. In the 1913 proposal for the Los Angeles State Normal School and Teachers College, the plan listed a “Rural School Work Instructor” as one of the school’s departmental needs. In the same document, one of the key reasons listed for the need for a teacher's college is “to promote rural school interests and advance rural school education.”³⁷ In order to address the need for rural education at LA Normal, specific courses were first offered in October 1914. LA Normal’s initial foray into rural education used existing city-based religious immigrant-reform institutions as their model. These courses were offered under the title “Mission Education” and hosted by top educators and civic and religious leaders. Speakers included the president of LA Normal, Dr. J. F. Millspaugh; founder of the Bethlehem Institute, Reverend Dana Bartlett; and Japanese Missionary, Hellen Topping. In the school newspaper, *The Normal Outlook*, an article describes the study courses as a new type of “Mission-study” in which “all study will be of current missionary problems at present stirring the city.”³⁸ The courses sought to further advance the “City Mission,”

³⁷ “The Proposed Los Angeles State Normal School and Teachers College,” 1915 1913, Rec Ser 1, State Normal School: B6 F14, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library. “Mission Study Classes Offered,” *The Normal Outlook*, October 16, 1914, Volume V. No. 4 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 5, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.³⁸ {Citation}

which was a Baptist organization that brought the foreign missionary model of religious conversion under the guise of charity to the city of Los Angeles.³⁹ The goal of the City Missions and organizations like Bartlett's Bethlehem Institute was to better the city by ridding the area of slums and saloons and to assimilate immigrants through the model of foreign missionary work.⁴⁰

In the LA Normal workshop, administrators made the connection between their situation, what they refer to as "Los Angeles foreign settlements," and the work of foreign missions.⁴¹ The "work" described in the article consisted of educational and religious indoctrination.⁴² Reformers sought to use the dual-edge sword of religious and educational indoctrination to reform communities, a historical strategy of imperial missionary efforts adapted to the United States. The colonial overtones, reinforce the perceived innate foreignness of immigrants and immigrant descendants in Los Angeles. Identifying certain populations as "Los Angeles foreign settlements" reinscribes difference, constructing immigrants as alien and separate from "white" Los Angeles. Missionaries, in Hawai'i, and across Native American reservations and at Indian

³⁹ "City Missions," *The Bulletin*, June 6, 1917, Newspapers.com; "Baptist City Mission Reports Encouraging," *Los Angeles Evening Express*, June 26, 1908, Newspapers.com; "The New Mission Will Open Saturday," *Whittier Daily News*, January 9, 1908, Newspapers.com; "Careers Are Decided," *Los Angeles Evening Express*, June 17, 1913, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁰ At a speaking event in Long Beach Bartlett proudly proclaimed that by 1920 Los Angeles would be "A city without a slum; a city without a saloon; a city that will be the pride of the world; the new Jerusalem; a city where God himself dwells." "Social Events," *The Long Beach Telegram*, November 7, 1913, Newspapers.com.

⁴¹ "Mission Study Classes Offered."

⁴²As Japanese Missionary Helen Topping boasted at a subsequent speaking engagement in Colton, California, "great change is being wrought in the land of the cherry blossom and that where once they felt that education was all that was necessary, their leaders are now recognizing the fact that education without religion is not sufficient." in "Social Events," *Colton Daily Courier*, May 29, 1914, Newspapers.com.

Boarding Schools were already engaged in enforcing American norms of citizenry while denying full enfranchisement.⁴³ Adapting the model of missionary education to immigrants living in the United States was an obvious first step for LA Normal.

Institutions like the Bethlehem Institute meshed religious conversion with assimilation through citizenship schools for adults, but leaders like Bartlett looked to the schools to further their work.⁴⁴ In a newspaper article, “Civic Education of the Immigrant” Bartlett proclaimed that apart from the Bethlehem Institute,

The public school is one of the great assimilating agencies. With the lower grades filled with stammer class of children and the night schools with adults, a great opportunity for American education is offered the foreigner. But there is a need for more distinctly civic education than is furnished as yet by the public schools.⁴⁵

Educators at LA Normal sought to take up that mantle through the “Mission Studies” courses and later through rural education. The first LA Normal “Mission Education” course focuses on the history of “The World in Los Angeles” and lists the countries of focus including Japan, China, India, Syria, Russia, Italy, and Mexico. It is clear then that the focus of reformers’ missionary zeal is assigned to the “problem” of the “foreign

⁴³ The nearby county of Riverside was home to the Sherman Institute, an off-reservation Indian boarding school which sought to Americanize Native American children. For more on Sherman see: Diana Meyers Bahr, *The Students of Sherman Indian School: Education and Native Identity since 1892* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013); Kevin Whalen, *Native Students at Work: American Indian Labor and Sherman Institute’s Outing Program, 1900-1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016); Clifford E. Trafzer, Jeffrey A. Smith, and Lorene Sisquoc, *Shadows of Sherman Institute: A Photographic History of the Indian School on Magnolia Avenue* (Pechanga: Great Oak Press, 2017).

⁴⁴ The confidence in the public school was not unique to the Bethlehem Institute. Most Progressive reform organizations singled out the school as a primary means of achieving social reform. “Humanitarians of every stripe saw education at the heart of their effort toward social alleviation.” Cremin, *The Transformation of the School; Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957.*, 85.

⁴⁵ Dana W. Bartlett, “Civic Education of the Immigrant,” *Los Angeles Evening Express*, September 30, 1910, Newspapers.com.

element” and increased immigration to Los Angeles.⁴⁶ The label of “foreigner” was assigned regardless of citizen or naturalization status.

The student teachers’ educational training did not stop at foreign history, nor did the course frame the issue of immigration as solely a city problem.⁴⁷ In fact, the majority of the courses offered focus on rural space rather than urban space. The second part of the course addresses rural education directly. As the article states, “A splendid course in rural problems is to be conducted by President Millspaugh, and two members of the faculty.”⁴⁸ These courses included lectures on “Rural Opportunity,” “Opportunities for Development of Social Welfare,” and “Rural Opportunities for Social Reconstruction.” The course goes beyond established rural reform ideas by laying out the assumed relationship between the issues of rural education and the education of ethnic minorities, perpetually racialized as “foreign.” Further, it collapses the rural education and “foreign education” problems into one by offering up these lectures as the solution to both problems simultaneously. LA Normal’s goal for rural education was to export the model of imperialist missionary work to the countryside, creating a new “frontier” in mission

⁴⁶ Bartlett constantly stoked fears about exponential increases in immigration due to the completion of the Panama Canal. As he warned at an immigration conference “In 1915, a flood of immigration will break upon our Pacific shores. A hundred thousand steerage passengers will annually pass through our Angel gate and every other port of entry will receive its proportion. We need not become panic stricken, but rather sobered as in the presence of a great work.” The solution to increased immigration, according to Bartlett, was to financially support organizations like the Bethlehem Institute, which he was accused of defrauding in 1914. “Dr. Bartlett Talks At Immigration Conference Is Elected As President,” *Los Angeles Evening Post-Record*, February 23, 1912, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁷ In fact, immigration was seen not as an issue facing the whole of Los Angeles but in particular slums and districts, particularly the 8th ward. These spaces were understood to be uncivilized and a threat to Los Angeles as “City Beautiful,” “What Dana Bartlett Is Doing,” *The Redondo Reflex*, December 3, 1908, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁸ “Mission Study Classes Offered.”

education, thereby seeking to reform both the rurality and “foreignness” of the students. It was now residents of the countryside, particularly Mexican and Asian immigrants who bore the brunt of missionary efforts, reinforcing their racialized status as “foreigners.”

The 1915 LA Normal yearbook, the *Class Exponent*, indicated that the school was still struggling to provide enough focus and training for student teachers in rural education. In the short article about the educational mission of the school and its ability to provide rural education training, administrators indicate that “All through the southern states public schools are found now trying to bring about the solution [to the rural problem]. Through the agency of the public schools, it has been reached already in many of the Mississippi Valley States. It will be reached wherever and whenever through intelligent leadership and assistance.”⁴⁹ As LA Normal administrators were beginning to focus on rural issues at home, they idolized the supposed success of the South. According to the analysis of architectural historian Jennifer Opager Baughn, in Mississippi rural school reform was largely effective only for white schools. She states that “This application of progressive practices to white rural schools brought about some parity between the two competing factions of Mississippi’s white community, the planter/merchant class, and the small farmers, furthering the ends of those who wanted to ensure the supremacy of whites in the then black-majority state.”⁵⁰ Largely, black schools and students were ignored while Progressive reforms were made for white students in an

⁴⁹ *Class Exponent Issued by Summer Class of Nineteen Hundred and Fifteen Los Angeles State Normal School*, 1915.

⁵⁰ Baughn, “A Modern School Plant,” 43.

effort to equalize class boundaries.⁵¹ Essentially the “rural school problem” was an issue that only affected white students. Rural school reforms were used to give poor white farmers the advantage over black farmers who had begun to accumulate wealth and land post-Civil War. However, in California where agribusiness and farming were controlled by the white country-town elite, education reformers were immensely concerned with Mexican and other foreign students, viewing them as California agribusiness’ future labor source. The combined threat of foreignness and non-whiteness led to the foreign rurality issue playing a large part in California education debates, and subsequently educational reforms. While the above description of the rural problem seems to idolize the “success” of the South, from 1915-1917 LA Normal would work to create its unique rural education tactics which were comprised of in-person teacher training in rural schools, where student teachers focused on Americanization and citizenship.

Elizabeth Keppie was first hired by LA Normal in 1910. In 1915 she wrote to principal Millspaugh requesting a class in rural education, and by 1916 she would become the leader of rural education at LA Normal. At first, Keppie had to challenge the ambivalence of Dr. Millspaugh in order to cultivate a more active focus on rural education. In November of 1914, Dr. Millspaugh received a letter from H. W. Foght with the United States Bureau of the Interior regarding the status of rural education at LA

⁵¹ Baughn is referring to the common rural school reform of school consolidation in which smaller schools were consolidated into a large, centralized school (described later in this chapter). Baughn notes that there were a few black schools which achieved consolidation and states that within these few schools “white administrators valued black schools for their tendency to keep black farmers, normally living as tenants on white-owned property, more content and less willing to move.” Baughn, 49.

Normal. He offered to visit LA Normal for observation, but Millspaugh declined.⁵² Later, in February of 1915, the superintendent of Imperial Valley wrote to Millspaugh stating that “Last spring Mis Keppie and I had the talk concerning the rural school problem. At that time, she said that she would like to spend some time in the rural schools studying them as they are and ought to be.”⁵³ This letter gives a glimpse into the future of rural education at LA Normal. It illustrates LA Normal’s newfound focus on placing teachers in rural schools to investigate rural conditions, as well as the beginnings of relationships between Los Angeles and the rural counties of California. In later years various school superintendents frequently offered up their classes as experiments for student teachers.⁵⁴ However, at the time, Millspaugh declined the request, stating that Keppie should return to Los Angeles and that her talents were needed there.

Despite his initial denial, *The Normal Outlook* indicates that Keppie took a leave of absence from Christmas until Easter in order to “visit rural schools in several counties of California.”⁵⁵ According to local newspapers Keppie’s visits were well received and, “she lived in the home of school patrons, parents, and trustees, met them and the children

⁵² H. W. Foght to Jesse F. Millspaugh, “Department of the Interior Rural School Inquiry,” November 11, 1914, Rec Ser 1, State Normal School: B4 F13, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library. Another example is found in a letter from the Kansas State Normal School requesting to collaborate with LA Normal. Millspaugh denied the offer due to a scheduling issue. Carl W. Salser to Jesse F. Millspaugh, “Kansas State Normal School Extension of Program in Los Angeles,” January 5, 1916, Rec Ser, State Normal School: B4 F13, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

⁵³ A.P. Shibley to Dr. J. L. Millspaugh, “Request for Teacher to Visit Rural School,” October 19, 1915, Rec Ser 1, State Normal School: B4 F9, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

⁵⁴ Charles A. Whitmore, “Experiment in Rural Supervision,” *Hanford Kings County Sentinel*, August 31, 1916, Newspapers.com; “School Problems,” *Bakersfield Morning Echo*, February 24, 1916, Newspapers.com.

⁵⁵ “Miss Keppie Leaves Normal For A Term,” *The Normal Outlook*, November 14, 1915, Volume VI. No. 10 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 7, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

officially and socially, and so caught the spirit of the rural community, and experienced the life of the country teacher.”⁵⁶ Her field experience inspired her to begin overhauling rural education at LA Normal in 1916. Her trip marked a shift in teacher training. No longer was the city of Los Angeles used as primary the lab for rural school preparation; teachers would now be immersed in California’s rural towns.

During Elizabeth Keppie’s absence from LA Normal, the school newspaper, the *Normal Outlook*, actively reported on her experiences at various rural schools in California. Keppie made a concerted effort to write frequent letters to LA Normal to provide first-hand reports on rural conditions. Detailed reports regarding her on-the-ground experiences in rural schools set off a flurry of activity and resources for those students interested in teaching at rural schools. From her early experiences, she noticed the clear connection between the purported rural problem and a particular foreign problem, Mexican communities. In her report, she states, “In every school, there have been some Mexican and Italian children...There is no reason why our graduates shouldn’t know Spanish, at least, and I should advise every girl who may have to take a rural school to learn it.”⁵⁷ Her assertion on the ubiquity of Mexicans and Mexican Americans in California rural schools inspires her to assert that all rural “cadets,” as teacher trainees are often referred, learn the Spanish language. In her first communique, she makes it explicit that learning Spanish and being able to interact with Mexican students is a necessity for rural teachers and that teachers must be trained accordingly. Akin to a

⁵⁶ Charles A. Whitmore, “Experiment in Rural Supervision.”

⁵⁷ “News from Miss Keppie,” *The Normal Outlook*, January 28, 1916, Volume VII. No. 4 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 7, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

general, Keppie has assessed the battlefield in which her rural cadets will be sent and deems the landscape to be filled with those of “foreign” heritage.

During her stay, she visited the “Brigg’s Spanish School” outside of Ventura, California, comprised of “Spanish-speaking” students, taught by one of LA Normal’s alumni.⁵⁸ While neither Keppie nor other administrators mention segregated schooling directly, Keppie’s visit to a “Spanish School” indicates that LA Normal was involved with segregated schooling and that rural segregated schools were present in the 1910s. One of the primary justifications for segregation was on the basis of language, often a “Spanish school” teaching “foreign pupils” was code for a racially segregated “Mexican school.” When rural schools are discussed, the student population is described as largely “foreign” without any comment on the children’s actual immigration status. Despite educators’ assumptions, data collected by economic economist Paul S. Taylor from 1927 indicated that 70.4% of Mexican Students in public schools were U.S.-born.⁵⁹ Keppie’s veiled mention of segregated schooling likely indicates that LA Normal student teachers were learning to teach in rural segregated schools and/or segregated classrooms.

⁵⁸ "This afternoon or tomorrow I go on, with all my paraphernalia, to the Brigg's Spanish School, which is some miles from Ventura. Miss E. Bassett is teacher there; she graduated last year from our school. There are twenty-six children, all Spanish-speaking. I am glad I've studied Spanish while I've been in Southern California and so can understand it and talk a little at least." "News From Miss Keppie."

⁵⁹ See table 5 “Children Enrolled in Public and Catholic Elementary Schools of California, February 1, 1927, Classified by Racial Groups, Place of Birth, and Divisions of the State.” In California as a whole Mexican U.S. born students made up 70.2 percent of the Mexican pupil population. Unfortunately the 1910 and 1920 census data report does not identify the Mexican population, providing data only for the following categories: “White, Negro, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, All Other.” Paul S. Taylor, *Mexican Labor in the United States*, University of California Publications in Economics, v. 6,no. 1-5; v. 7, nos. 1–2; v. 12, nos. 1–3 (New York: Johnson Reprint Corp, 1966), 278.

In the years preceding 1920, the practices of segregation were coalescing so that, as education historian Raftery observes, “Alongside Americanization and its supposed promise for democracy, blatant, undemocratic segregation settled in on public schools in the 1920s.”⁶⁰ Segregation based on race was not just “undemocratic,” there was simply no law that existed permitting the segregation of Mexican or African American students based on race. Originally section 1662 of the 1880 California school code required that schools must be open for “all children.” However, in 1885 legislatures changed the school code to allow for the segregation of “Mongolian” students. Until 1924, Native American students were forced to attend federally run Indian schools. Despite these rules, no formal legislative law called for the segregation of Mexicans.⁶¹ Further, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo set the legal precedent that Mexicans were racially white for the purposes of citizenship, which was reinforced in the federal court decision in *Re Ricardo Rodriguez* (1897). Despite this, de facto segregation flourished, relying on justifications like Americanization, language, hygiene, and IQ, all aspects coded with racial assumptions.

In practice, thanks in large part to segregated schooling, the legal whiteness of Mexicans was actively contested by a local/regional understanding of race which cast Mexican residents as perpetually foreign and in need of Americanization. Part of the racial formation of Mexicans from white to racial other had to do with conditions in rural space. While Raftery’s discussion of urban schools spends much time discussing

⁶⁰ Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*, 110.

⁶¹ For more see Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed*; Torres-Rouff, “Becoming Mexican.”

European immigrant groups, in particular German, Russian and Italian communities, the demographics were different in rural areas.⁶²

As discussed in chapter 2, Mexican labor became central to the success of California agriculture, particularly in the citrus industry. The racial capitalism of the citrus industry forged a strict Mexican/white binary. In Bryn Mawr, the large presence of Mexican workers resulted in the creation of designated Mexican space within the country town, as discussed in chapter 2, as well as the creation of a segregated school in 1911. González's study of citrus colonias also attests to strict racial binaries in rural space, "This ethnic diversity [in urban areas] contrasted sharply with the simple ethnic division found in rural settlements: on the one side, Mexicans, and on the other, Anglo-Americans."⁶³ Due to racial stratification and the high numbers of Mexicans and Mexican Americans in these rural spaces, a regional racial hierarchy that sharply delineated between Mexicans and white elites affected all aspects of life, from housing to labor to education. Discrimination and segregation were based on Mexicans perceived racial differences rather than the actual particulars of immigration status. In Bryn Mawr, for instance, as I show in chapter 2, a large percentage of the Mexican population, 33% of the population in 1900, were born in the United States. As Torres-Rouff argued, "local governments throughout southern California and scientists across the Southwest remade the national identifier "Mexican" into a racial category."⁶⁴ Further, Torres-Rouff argues that "Mexican schools served as sites for the production and definition of a distinct

⁶² For more see chapter 2 "Progressivism Moves into Schools" Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*.

⁶³ González, *Labor and Community*, 1994, 131.

⁶⁴ Torres-Rouff, "Becoming Mexican," 93.

Mexican racial category within the region.”⁶⁵ If schools became crucial sites of racial formation within rural spaces, then the rural educational “experts,” administrators, and teachers were central to maintaining racialized systems.

Fieldwork: Bringing Teacher “Cadets” to Rural Schools

In her private letters to Dr. Millspaugh, Keppie expresses her excitement over her work and asks for the opportunity to teach a class in “Rural Methods” as well as “arrange the program of our seniors to give them at least three weeks in a country school where there are all the grades.”⁶⁶ Her insistence on the importance of practical experience became her educational tactic and she sought to give all her student teachers field experience. In her writing, she also touches on another common source of anxiety among educators and Country Lifers alike, the impracticality of the one-room schoolhouse, and the challenges it poses to teachers. In another private letter, she focuses on other common issues like the lack of amenities and housing for teachers and the lack of teachers with appropriate qualifications.⁶⁷ Despite these apparent issues, Keppie continued with her crusade. Due to her perseverance, in April of 1916, the student newspaper reported that students are teaching in the country schools and receiving school credit for their work.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Torres-Rouff, 126.

⁶⁶ Miss Elizabeth Keppie c/o Mr. Chenowith to Dr. J. L. Millspaugh, “Conditions in Rural Schools,” February 17, 1916, Rec Ser 1, State Normal School: B4 F9, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

⁶⁷ Elizabeth E. K. to Jesse F. Millspaugh, “Concern of Bakersfield Rural Schools,” February 29, 1916, Rec Ser 1, State Normal School: B4 F 15, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

⁶⁸ “Students Teach in Country Schools,” *The Normal Outlook*, April 28, 1916, Volume VII. No. 16 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 7, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

As the methodology for dealing with the rural problem evolved both at LA Normal and throughout the state, the problematic “rural school” was juxtaposed with the newly created “ideal country school,” which became the goal of rural education, at least in theory. These schools are often described not necessarily in terms of the type of education being provided to the pupils but on how the school was constructed and conducted. At LA Normal what transformed a rural school into an ideal school was the presence of technology. The *Normal Outlook* lists aspects of rural industrialization when they claim that each rural schoolhouse should have a “hand force pump, running water, indoor toilets, and the most approved heating and ventilation system,” as well as appropriate oversight.⁶⁹ Reformers sought to better the infrastructure of the schools physically as well as ideologically by placing more qualified teachers in rural space.

In a speech on rural education in December of 1916, Keppie emphasized the role of the teacher’s presence rather than the mode of teaching. She stated that “the teacher in the rural school is looked up to by every member of her community, and her dress and habits have a great influence upon them.”⁷⁰ Here Keppie laid out the idealized moral and educational role within rural space. The teacher is positioned in the place of moral authority as the bearer of civilization. Although Keppie does not make explicit mention

⁶⁹ “To Take Charge of Rural School Work,” *The Normal Outlook*, June 9, 1916, Volume VII. No. 22 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 7, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

⁷⁰ “December Graduates Hold First Assembly,” *The Normal Outlook*, September 29, 1916, Volume VII. No. 27 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 7, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

of the teacher's race, rural elementary school teachers were assumed to be, and most often were, white women.

White women's presence in Mexican and "foreign" classrooms breaks with racial schooling divides in the South in which black teachers taught black students while white teachers taught white students. As will be discussed in chapter 4, gendered conceptions of education emphasized white women's moral expertise in the home and childcare and as "mothers" of the nation. In the context of "foreign education" and in a system in which all Mexicans are racialized as foreign, the presence of a teacher of the student's own race was not an acceptable solution. The desired outcome of Americanization could only be secured by white women, as their position as mothers of the nation placed them in a particular moral position to be the harbingers of American culture. The white women teacher is described as a representative of not just higher education but of a model of white middle-class civility, exemplified through their dress and habits.

Rural school reformers hoped the white rural teacher would influence not only her students but the community at large. As the harbingers of American morals and industrial democracy, educators, and the teachers they trained believed teachers could transform rural space. Educators assumed rural space to be deficient - in desperate need of educator's modernity. Attendees of a LA Normal rural education meeting asserted, "Rural people develop less mentally through lack of opportunity to hear music and drama. The rural school must supply this lack by becoming a social center."⁷¹ Despite

⁷¹ "Miss Weer Speaks at Rural Ed. Meeting," *The Normal Outlook*, February 23, 1917, Volume VIII. No. 8 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 7, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

many rural education proponents discussing teacher preparedness, most often concerns over teacher preparedness were second to the belief that the rural space itself was the chief obstacle to achieving sufficient education. The goal was to make the school a center of the community. By reforming the school into a community center, the ideals of Progressive Era morality and modernity could seep into the community and repair the perceived backwardness of rural society.

The experience of teaching in a rural school is consistently described as a challenging battle for rural “cadets.” One student teacher wrote to *The Normal Outlook* to describe his experience working in a one-room schoolhouse teaching eight grades at the same time. The newspaper states that he “is battling with the school problem.”⁷² While teaching pupils from eight separate grades at the same time is surely a challenge, the language of “battle” alongside his position as a “rural cadet” poses rural conditions as something to be eradicated or destroyed rather than adapted or changed. The military language employed by students and administrators at LA Normal situates the work of rural teachers as a moral crusade against the problems present in rural spaces, namely, the rural population, which in the Inland Empire included large numbers of students who teachers understood to be “foreign.”

In order to teach the skills needed to advance society and reform, the rural teachers needed to be placed in the rural space. In addition to their courses at LA Normal, aspiring teachers were given special training through the activities of the Rural Education

⁷² “Enjoys Teaching in Real Rural School,” *The Normal Outlook*, May 19, 1916, Volume VII. No. 19 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 7, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

Club and a two-week cadet program. The Rural Education Club was a collection of courses under the direction of Miss Keppie which *The Normal Outlook* was confident “will revolutionize rural teaching.”⁷³ These courses, however, were not simply theoretical, they were also meant to give students practical experience. The club would “receive reports from visiting teachers; help interest the neighborhood in Parent-Teacher Associations; encourage the formation and maintenance of Civic Center; help graduates who have gone out to teach and who are inadequately supplied with books and periodicals; through the Correspondence Committee help to secure speakers to address club.”⁷⁴ The club activities echo the efforts of local school administrators like A.S. McPherron in San Bernardino, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

With their coursework completed, senior students were ready to conduct rural practice teaching where they would reside “in a rural community for a period of two weeks at the student’s expense.”⁷⁵ The goal of rural fieldwork was multifold; to give teachers experience in a one-room schoolhouse, to start to endear the teacher to the community, and to understand the nuances of rural community issues.⁷⁶ The chief aim of rural educational reform was to alter the rural community rather than innovate the

⁷³ “Rural Ed. Club Is Recently Organized,” *The Normal Outlook*, November 24, 1916, Volume VII. No. 35 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 7, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

⁷⁴ “Rural Education Extension Club,” *The Normal Outlook*, January 12, 1917, Volume VIII. No. 2 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 7, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

⁷⁵ “Concerning Rural School Practice Teaching,” *The Normal Outlook*, February 9, 1917, Volume VIII. No. 6 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 7, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

⁷⁶ “Rural Teachers Start Cadet Work For Term,” *The Normal Outlook*, February 15, 1918, Volume IX No. 7 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 8, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library. “The privilege of Rural School Cadetting is usually limited to Senior A’s. The course is designed to give them a change to practice in a country school, as their previous practice teaching has been in city schools, and many of them will become teachers in country schools after their graduation.”

teachers' pedagogy. Rural people and rural customs were viewed as obstacles by the cadets. As one cadet wrote in *The Normal Outlook* "the greatest problem of the rural school teacher is NOT pedagogy but DEALING WITH THE PEOPLE."⁷⁷ Her clear disdain and frustration with the rural populace and its demands on the rural teacher are apparent.

Cadet training was, therefore, the only way to expose students to the difficulties of rural space; for LA Normal administrators it was not their pedagogy that needed reform, it was the populace. LA Normal student teachers, acting as soldiers, would be on the front lines of reform. Their role was to create programmatic reforms to better manage and reform students. Ideally, after the course and training, these teachers would then work permanently in country schools after graduation and help curb the teacher qualification issue.

Elizabeth Keppie's Legacy

Miss Keppie's rural education reforms including the cadet training program and the association between the rural and foreign problems remained in place as LA Normal transitioned into a Teaching College and, later, the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1919. An analysis of student teacher's counseling cards from the UCLA Charles E. Young Research Library from the 1930s indicates how UCLA teachers continued to map foreign problems onto rural spaces. The counseling cards were created

⁷⁷ Annette Glick, "Rural School Life," *The Normal Outlook*, October 8, 1915, Volume VI. No. 1 edition, Rec Ser 00113 Box 7, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

by individual teaching students and submitted to the counseling office to help them receive job offers.⁷⁸ On these cards, students indicated their qualifications, subject and location interests, previous experiences, and skills like foreign languages.

For example, Doris Cummins, class of 1934, stated her interest in teaching at a rural school in the “preferred location section” and stated separately in the “notes” section that, “I am very much interested in teaching arithmetic and Physical Education I would like to teach either departmentally. I would rather teach in a small school of Mexican or Japanese children.”⁷⁹ Cummins’s responses on her counseling card conflate rural and “foreign” students. She assumes not only that this relationship exists but also that the same assumption would be shared by her future employer. Student teachers’ assumptions indicate how well established the connection between rural and foreign education was in educational circles. Similarly, Virginia Hancock states that her major was Rural Elementary and that, “I have had experience in teaching foreign children who are first learning to speak English.”⁸⁰ Her experience makes it clear that those students majoring in Rural Elementary in the 1930s are receiving training in rural school issues, and were learning about foreign education, particularly language education. As González argues in his chapter “Language and Culture,” according to Americanization proponents,

⁷⁸ The counseling service was optional and was not mandatory, therefore those records that survive are a self-selected group of student teachers. While the record description indicates that these cards are from 1900-1940, the majority are from the 1930s.

⁷⁹ “Prospective Teachers Data Cards” (University of California, Los Angeles Placement and Career Planning Center, 1945 1930), Rec Ser 0541 Boxes 1-4, UCLA, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

⁸⁰ “Prospective Teachers Data Cards.”

“Within the assimilation process, language formed the core of transformation.”⁸¹

Teaching students English was a pillar of Americanization as teachers policed and punished students' use of the Spanish language in the classroom.

Another prospective teacher, Esther Rothstein, who later worked in San Bernardino County, indicates an interest in foreign education and, in so doing, professes the same ideologies taught by Keppie in the mid-1910s. Rothstein states that “I would like to teach and work with others interested in making the school the center of social progress, of use to children and adults. I would like Americanization work being well acquainted with American history and ideals.”⁸² Here she alludes to the Country Life Movement goal of the creation of the “ideal country school” as a method of community reform. As I will show later in this chapter, transforming the school into a social center or “making the school the center of social progress,” was a central tenet of rural education reform. Further, her focus on Americanization and “American history and ideals” speaks to the growing importance of Americanization tactics in the creation of an effective citizenry. The continued relevance of the methods and theories formed by the LA Normal rural education department in the 1910s attests to how the issue of foreign rurality was viewed as a continual issue into the 1930s. The legacy of Elizabeth Keppie and her rural education reforms influenced the outlook of new teachers for over two decades. Due to her campaign to promote attention and funding to rural education, student training in rural classrooms work became the central means for teacher training and education.

⁸¹ González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 34.

⁸² “Prospective Teachers Data Cards.”

Part II State Expansion in Education

From 1910 into the 1920s the state and county's power and influence over education grew rapidly due to the "need" to address educators' concerns over the "foreign element." After educators firmly established the connection between the "rural problem" and the "foreign problem" and successfully racialized Mexican students as inherently foreign, the state apparatus could be used to "solve" the problem.

Consolidation or Segregated Schools? Policy in San Bernardino County

Rural school consolidation was the central rural school reform strategy promoted by the Country Life Movement. Proponents of rural consolidation believed it to be the key to solving the rural school problem and reforming rural space by creating a more educated rural citizenry. While rural consolidation was a popular national policy, educators in California strove to adapt consolidation to fit their own needs and local rural conditions. Rather than advocate for rural school consolidation following the Country Life Model, administrators proposed alternative solutions like community schools, union districts, and in the end, direct intervention in each small school rather than consolidating rural areas and forcing racial integration. Tracing the attempts at consolidation and the state's abandonment of consolidation policy shows the ways administrators and educators adopted the "rural school problem" to address foreign education and create early segregated schools.

As previously stated, the national Country Life Movement, often assumed that rural space was a white space.⁸³ As a result, rural consolidation efforts to create fewer but larger schools in rural areas do not threaten the racial hierarchy. In his study of rural consolidation Reynolds notes that “in the Midwest, efforts to consolidate rural school districts became one of the most significant social movements of the Progressive Era.”⁸⁴ At its most basic level, rural school consolidation focuses on eliminating small, one-room rural schoolhouses in order to create larger multi-grade schools. These schools would then make up larger, and thereby fewer, districts and have access to a high school. Consolidation was heralded by Country Life reformers and educators like Anderson, Bailey, and Kern. Kern, in particular, was an early proponent of the school consolidation movement and believed that consolidation was the only means by which the educational experience of the rural child could ever match urban educational advantages.⁸⁵ However, with the different racialized geography of citrus country towns in San Bernardino County, rural consolidation was undesirable. Consolidating schools, and thereby, racially diverse students, would threaten the racialized order, which placed Mexicans at the bottom of the racialized hierarchy. Administrators desired a method to enact and then maintain segregationist practices.

⁸³ Race was also a complicated debate in the South, for more on rural school consolidation in Mississippi see Baughn, “A Modern School Plant.”

⁸⁴ Reynolds, *There Goes the Neighborhood Rural School Consolidation at the Grass Roots in Early Twentieth-Century Iowa*, 4.

⁸⁵ While most reformers agreed that school consolidation was central to reforming space, rural residents did not. As Reynolds notes in his study, even in the Midwest during the rural consolidation process, reformers faced significant local resistance to these reforms along class lines. Despite community-based resistance, the process of consolidation was at first promoted in California along with the other Country Life reforms. For more see Reynolds, *There Goes the Neighborhood Rural School Consolidation at the Grass Roots in Early Twentieth-Century Iowa*. Kern, *Among Country Schools*. See Chapter XII.

San Bernardino County school policy showcases the prioritization of separation rather than consolidation. Primary education in San Bernardino County was led by the County Superintendent of Schools.⁸⁶ At the time of the superintendency's establishment in California in 1852, only nine states had such an office.⁸⁷ The superintendent connected local and state education, "As intermediate officials, county superintendents served the interests of their local communities as well as those of the state."⁸⁸ During the Progressive Era, the superintendent evolved from a simple clerical position to an increasingly bureaucratic and political office that dictated county-wide education policies, curriculum, and funding.

During the height of rural reform, A.S. McPherron was the superintendent of San Bernardino County. He oversaw the creation of new schools located in the rural desert communities such as Hesperia and Victorville.⁸⁹ Some saw McPherron as an advocate for

⁸⁶ "The county school superintendent evolved not from grassroots school organization, but rather was created to assist state superintendents in overseeing distribution of state funds and in assuring local school compliance with state laws. Most states and territories established county school systems with superintendents in the mid to late 1800s. County superintendents performed several key functions with some state-by-state variation. First, they channeled state funds to local schools. Second, county superintendents became indispensable partners in compiling school statistics because they could more easily visit isolated schoolhouses to verify information than could state officials. They counted students, reported conditions of outhouses, and described the usability of wood stoves. As populations shifted and land use changed, county superintendents also assumed the heinous task of adjusting school district lines, a matter that frequently triggered bitter feuds among communities." Jackie M. Blount, *Destined to Rule the Schools: Women and the Superintendency, 1873-1995*, SUNY Series, Educational Leadership Destined to Rule the Schools (Place of publication not identified: State University of New York Press, 1998), 42.

⁸⁷ Smith, Gerald Arthur, *History of the County School Administration of San Bernardino County, California* (San Bernardino County Historical Society, 1954), 6.

⁸⁸ Blount, *Destined to Rule the Schools*, 43.

⁸⁹ Most of these schools were rural and many were set up because of labor or agricultural interests. Some schools were defined as "emergency districts" which comprised of a single school. Rosemine is an example which only existed for a single year. As González notes, "The law did not mandate the creation of these schools, but county governments could establish them voluntarily upon the urging of the state Board of Education. In the great valleys of California and in the agricultural areas of southern California, numerous towns and villages contained thousands of Mexican field laborers. In general, wherever the Mexican

rural schools in particular.⁹⁰ Unlike other Country Life advocates, he did not focus on rural school consolidation. Instead, he focused on another reform posed by the Country Life and Progressive education movements, creating schools in small communities to have them serve as supportive community centers.⁹¹ McPherron was an advocate for making school buildings the center of the community. In his "Annual Report of the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools year ending 1913," he states, "Much effort has been given by the county superintendent to the subject of the school as a social and civic center. Nearly all new school buildings are equipped with a commodious auditorium for the use of the community in these useful activities."⁹² Despite his seeming non-compliance to the ideal of rural school consolidation McPherron was focused on upholding the Country Life directive for community schools.

population grew large enough, the state constructed a Mexican school." González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 30.

⁹⁰ "It is conceded that the schools of the county, and particularly the rural schools to which Professor McPherron has devoted so much time and attention, are in the highest state of efficiency they have ever reached, and it is with a good conscience that Mr. McPherron and his friends put forward his candidacy, which as yet has not been challenged or opposed." "Professor A. S. McPherron," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, February 12, 1910.

⁹¹ "Community Schools" as an educational reform had roots in Progressive education reform championed by leader John Dewey, "Recall that Dewey's "embryonic community" was to *reflect* the life of the larger society, thereby removing the curse he saw in traditional education, isolation from reality. But even more important, Dewey's "embryonic community" was to *improve* the larger society by making it more "worthy, lovely, and harmonious." Once again, the school is cast as a lever of social change: for as soon as "worthy, lovely, and harmonious" are defined, educational theory - once more in Platonic terms - becomes political theory, and the educator is inevitably cast into the struggle for social reform." Cremin, *The Transformation of the School; Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957.*, 118. The idea of a community school was then taken up as a primary means to aid rural schools in particular. "The country communities are in need of social centers - places where persons may naturally meet, and where a real neighborhood interest exists...If the school develops such a center, it must concern itself directly with the interest of the people...The school must express the best cooperation of all social and economic forces that make for the welfare of the community...The school must be fundamentally redirected, until it becomes a new kind of institution." L. H. Bailey et al., *Report of the Country Life Commission: Special Message from the President of the United States Transmitting the Report of the Country Life Commission.*, 54.

⁹² Gerald Arthur Smith, *History of the County School Administration of San Bernardino County, California* (San Bernardino County Historical Society, 1954). 251.

Within school community centers, McPherron focused on expanding community buy-in through the creation of district Parent Teacher Associations. He also made changes within the curriculum. In his 1913 annual report, he states that “The work of the manual training departments of the schools has greatly increased during the year... School agriculture and school gardening was carried on in a very scientific manner and with great success, in many of the schools the educational advantages of these branches being fully understood and appreciated.”⁹³ McPherron’s focus on agriculture and manual training education recall the citrus country town efforts to industrialize farming and agricultural knowledge. In his annual report, he also mentions that “The plan of uniting school districts and transporting the pupils to a central building is growing in favor with the people and is resulting in a marked improvement in the schools thus uniting.”⁹⁴ While his statement seems to be in accordance with the policy of school consolidation through the creation of “central schools,” in actuality McPherron was involved in the creation of segregated schools in the county.

Rather than consolidation, McPherron’s main concern was rapidly expanding the number of schools in the county. He often publicized the incremental school increases in newspapers and used the school directories as evidence of his reforms. A newspaper article describes the addition of 24 new teachers as an indicator of “the substantial growth in the public schools of the county.”⁹⁵ As San Bernardino education researcher Arthur

⁹³ Smith, Gerald Arthur, *History of the County School Administration of San Bernardino County, California*, 251.

⁹⁴ Smith, Gerald Arthur, 251.

⁹⁵ “School Directory Shows an Increase,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, November 15, 1912.

Smith observes, much of McPherron’s legacy rested on the creation of new school districts.⁹⁶ New districts were either formed in growing territories or were created from existing districts. Over the course of his tenure, twenty-one new school districts were created, resulting in a total of 77 school districts in the 1914-1915 school year. The sharp increase in school districts was due to the increase in school children in the county, but it was also due to the types of school children in the county. A dive into the history of the Mission School District in Bryn Mawr illustrates how and why new schools and districts were created.

In 1857, the Mission School District became the second school district in San Bernardino County.⁹⁷ In 1900, the Mission District had two schools, the Mission Central



Figures 18 and 19: On right 1881 Mission School Building, on left 1904 Mission School Building in Mission Revival Architectural style. (Courtesy, Archives, A.K. Smiley Public Library)

Building and the Barton School. In 1904, a new Mission School building was constructed in Mission Revival Architectural style to replace the 1881 school. The Mission Central

⁹⁶ Smith, Gerald Arthur, *History of the County School Administration of San Bernardino County, California*, 234.

⁹⁷ Smith, Gerald Arthur, 41.

Building was meant to be the crown jewel of the Mission District. The local newspaper, the *Redlands Daily Facts*, describes the school as follows: “The plans show a two-story, with four rooms on the ground floor, porches, and ante-rooms. The upper floor will have a stage and thus afford the residents of the Mission District a fine place for all kinds of gatherings. A brick and cement foundation will be built and there will be a cellar. The building will be a frame structure, with rustic and galvanized iron finishings. The cost is given at about \$15,000.”⁹⁸ The Mission School Building embodied McPherron’s ideal of the school community center and featured an auditorium open to the white community. The school was built to serve the citrus country town elite and was instrumental in furthering community building among citrus families, strengthening the ties within the country town social system. The community center schools created during McPherron’s tenure were created for a specific type of community, the white citrus elite who ruled the areas of the Mission District and Redlands, where McPherron and his supporters lived.

Rather than demolish the entire original Mission School building to make room for the new one, they saved the 1885 addition and moved the structure less than half a mile to Bryn Mawr.⁹⁹ The small building was used as a Sunday school.¹⁰⁰ Later it was proposed that the site could become a Spanish-only school, to instruct the Mexican students in English. In 1911, Bryn Mawr School opened its doors to Mexican students.

⁹⁸*The Citrograph*, Redlands, June 25, 1904, 8.

⁹⁹ Overland the distance between the Mission School and the new Bryn Mawr School were only about 2,400 feet away from each other and about a mile away if taking established streets. The small distance between the two schools further emphasizes the racial reasoning for creating the school as there was no reason besides race to create two schools so near to each other.

¹⁰⁰ Atchley, “Mission School: A History,” 46.

As the *Redlands Daily Facts* announced, “The new school house at Bryn Mawr for the Mexicans, has been completed and will be ready for the opening of school there next Monday.”¹⁰¹ Additions to the Mexican school were constructed with \$3,000 and in the end, included four rooms.¹⁰²

The early construction of a Mexican school in Bryn Mawr indicates that the school district was ahead of California segregation trends, which would become nearly universal in the late 1920s.¹⁰³ Authors such as Wollenberg, Menchaca, and Valencia, and González attribute the phenomena of segregation to the 1920s.¹⁰⁴ Wollenberg, in particular, references the opening of the Ontario school in 1921 and the Riverside Liberty School in 1924 as “early” examples of Mexican schools.¹⁰⁵ Although Bryn Mawr School may stand out as an exception to the rule, the school is indicative of an emerging trend of segregated schools in Southern California.

¹⁰¹ “Local Notes: School House Finished,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, September 16, 1911, XX, no 61 edition.

¹⁰² Atchley, “Mission School: A History,” 46.

¹⁰³ Bryn Mawr represents one of the first segregated schools. It is the author’s belief that a focus on smaller districts, particularly in San Bernardino County, will uncover earlier manifestations of school segregation in California. At present time the earliest Mexican school is represented by David Torres-Rouff. In his 2012 article he states that the Pasadena School created in 1913 was the “first parent-initiated “Mexican school” in southern California.” Torres-Rouff, “Becoming Mexican,” 91.

¹⁰⁴ “The segregation of Santa Paula’s Mexican students followed a common pattern throughout California. As the size of the Mexican population increased in the late 1920s school segregation became widespread, sharply increasing by the early 1930s.” Martha Menchaca and Richard R. Valencia, “Anglo-Saxon Ideologies in the 1920s-1930s: Their Impact on the Segregation of Mexican Students in California,” *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (1990): see also: 222–249; Charles Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed: Segregation and Exclusion in California Schools, 1855-1975* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); and González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 2. González points to the Superintendent of Santa Ana’s upholding of segregation in 1919 as an early example. However, Texas has earlier segregated schools dating to the 1890s for example the Corpus Christi segregated school opened in 1892.

¹⁰⁵ Wollenberg does mention an elementary school in Riverside that was “predominantly Mexican as early as 1910” but a designated Mexican school building was not erected until 1924 after complaints from white parents. Charles Wollenberg, “Mendez v. Westminster: Race, Nationality and Segregation in California Schools,” *California Historical Quarterly* 53, no. 4 (1974): 319, <https://doi.org/10.2307/25157525>.

Rather than consolidate, the racial landscape of the region led educators to side-step rural school consolidation in favor of the creation of more ethnic schools. Administrators justified the creation of segregated schools on the basis of pedagogical concerns, thereby creating two tracks of rural education, one for the population of foreign students and another for the wealthy white elite. These segregated schools were often the one-room schoolhouses that proponents of rural school consolidation despised. Early segregated schools such as the Bryn Mawr School saw the introduction of early Americanization experiments.¹⁰⁶

At the same time that Elizabeth Keppie was overhauling rural education at LA Normal, and at the tail end of McPherron's tenure, the state was becoming more and more invested in rural education. Margaret Schellenberger McNaught was the State Commissioner for Elementary Education in 1916. In her portion of the *Second Biennial Report of the State Board of Education* for the years 1914-1916, she spends some time discussing California's rural problem. Her appraisal of the issue closely follows the nation-wide Country Life Movement ideals. Her primary focus was on the issue of one-room schoolhouses and the need for rural school consolidation. In her assessment, she states, "The object is to provide for the children of rural districts opportunities for school instruction that shall be approximately equal to those given to children of the cities. That

¹⁰⁶ As David Torres-Rouff indicated in his study of the Pasadena segregated school "Moreover, the segregated schools that parents, teachers, and school board members established subsequently served as laboratories in which sociologists, psychologists, and other social scientist created data sets that offered scientific evidence suggesting the existence of a separate and subordinate Mexican racial category." Early schools like Bryn Mawr were critical in establishing the policies of Americanization which would be solidified in the 1930s. Torres-Rouff, "Becoming Mexican," 95.

equality cannot be given in a one-room school taught by a single teacher."¹⁰⁷ Her assertion that the one-room schoolhouse is inherently unequal is a more radical stance than held at LA Normal. Her goal, therefore, was to eradicate the one-room schoolhouse through a different form of rural consolidation, the creation of union school districts.

The idea of a union district, while in the spirit of rural consolidation, diverged in critical ways. The creation of the union school district was a unique form of consolidation, which did not create a single consolidated schoolhouse for rural residents but allowed for multiple school districts to pool resources and have access to a local high school.¹⁰⁸ In 1916, union districts were officially approved by the state.¹⁰⁹ The ideal union school district had many small elementary schools and one shared high school. Union Districts would allow rural students the opportunity to receive a high school education. However, based on California's agricultural labor regime, with only a few exceptions, Mexican students were not given the opportunity to attend high school due to the pressure to provide for their families, local administrators denying entrance to schools, and substandard elementary education. Union districts made sure that most rural districts had access to a high school but did not limit the number of primary schoolhouses

¹⁰⁷ California State Department of Education Division of Elementary Education, "Second Biennial Report of the State Board of Education State of California 1914-1916," 1916 1914, California State Government Publications.

¹⁰⁸ The process by which these union school districts were created varied from the top-down Country Life movement convention. To create a union district the "heads of families" from the two districts would need to petition the county superintendent of schools to create the union school district and the district would only be created with a majority vote. James Henry Deering California, *The Political Code of the State of California: Adopted March 12, 1872. With ...* (Bancroft-Whitney, 1916), 383, <http://archive.org/details/politicalcodest01deergoog>.

¹⁰⁹ In order to reorient the rural schools, the importance of the union district was approved by the state through section 1674 of the Political Code, which was issued in April of 1916.

in a district. As a result, white students could continue to enjoy a citrus country town system with local segregated schools and the opportunity to get higher agricultural education in high school.¹¹⁰ By not limiting the number of primary schools, districts were free to create as many segregated schools as needed, while simultaneously denying “foreign” students access to high school education. In other words, union school districts were a particular form of consolidation allowing for segregation and maintaining white space. Essentially, the process multiplied segregated elementary schools while barring advancement to high school and college education.

While Union Districts were popular in the second half of the 1910s, by the mid-1920s any pretense about rural consolidation would be abandoned. In Ethel Richardson’s 1924 Biennial report she states that

The organization of the high school work has been the most satisfactory attempt at rural education in this country. Whereas, in the beginning, all of the classes were held in the high school building, it was soon discovered that the foreign colonies are usually far from the center of the high school district where the high school building is to be found. Union high schools usually include in their districts from five to twenty-five elementary school districts. The elementary school is familiar to the foreigner and not so imposing as to discourage his attendance.¹¹¹

In her report, Richardson outlines the way in which the union districts were effective in perpetuating segregation as high schools were literally, at least in her description, out of the reach of “foreign” populations. Richardson’s solution is to abandon any possibility

¹¹⁰ California had a robust high school agricultural program, one of the best in the nation. “At the secondary level most of the states established preparatory courses in connection with their agricultural colleges, while Alabama, Georgia, Wisconsin, and California pioneered in state-aided agricultural high schools.” Cremin, *The Transformation of the School; Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957.*, 78–79.

¹¹¹ Ethel Richardson, “Report of the Assistant State Superintendent of Public Instruction In Charge of Adult Education,” Appendix to Journals of Senate and Assembly, California Forty-Sixth Session, 1925, June 30, 1924, 55, California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento California, <https://archive.org/details/appendixtojourn19254cali/page/n619>.

for “the foreigner” to have access to a high school education and instead favor segregated elementary schools as the primary method for education. Rather than use high schools or large centers to bring rural students together, the utilization of separate elementary schools is preferred on account of the foreign status of the pupils. The state, in abandoning the consolidated high school focused its attention on these small elementary schools to keep “foreign” students confined to lower grade levels. The state’s intervention within rural education would center on literacy and the creation of libraries. California’s abandonment of rural school consolidation, one of the central tenets of the national Country Life Movement for rural school reform, reflects how the foreign rurality of California upset convention and desires to maintain a strict racial hierarchy. The tactics used by their counterparts in the Midwest and South would be sidelined and in favor of direct state intervention in citizenship, particularly through programs promoting literacy and Americanization.

State Intervention: Literacy and Free Libraries

With the identification of the rural school problem as a foreign problem, state agencies became increasingly concerned with issues of citizenship. Debates and anxieties about citizenship and foreigners were often linked to concerns about illiteracy and access to English language books and literature. One of the leading advocates for Americanization efforts was Ethel Richardson, a resident of Pasadena, California who

worked with the state Commission of Immigration and Housing.¹¹² In 1916, the state tasked the Commission of Immigration and Housing, rather than the state education department, with Americanization efforts. Richardson's task was to survey all of Los Angeles and assess the number of residents who could not speak, read, or write in English. The goal of the language survey was to quantify the need for "an educational campaign for the benefit of every foreign-born person."¹¹³ Before the mid-1910s the state was not heavily involved in the education of immigrant populations and left these efforts up to local jurisdictions. However, in light of World War I in Europe and American calls for isolationism, "the foreign element" within the United States became the main target of bureaucratic reformers.

In an extensive profile of Richardson in *The San Bernardino County Sun*, the connections between isolationism, Progressive politics, and educational reforms become clear. The article begins with the charge: "America first! This is the slogan which bids fair to revolutionize American conditions through education of the immigrant and by the elimination of illiteracy."¹¹⁴ In Richardson's assessment of immigrants, their presence and illiteracy, are a threat not just to local conditions, but to America and Americanism itself, particularly in the context of looming world war. By categorizing immigrant education and illiteracy issues as threats to the state, it justifies state intervention in new

¹¹² Other scholars like Raftery and Gayle Gullett have focused on the career of Mary Gibson. Raftery notes that Gibson made Richardson the head of the commission in 1917, in 1920 it became part of the Department of Education officially. Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*, 84.

¹¹³ "Ethel Richardson Leads Movement to Educate All Immigrants," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, February 4, 1916, Newspapers.com.

¹¹⁴ "Ethel Richardson Leads Movement to Educate All Immigrants."

ways. Further, her use of anti-war sentiment towards the war in Europe only serves to point a finger at a new, more important war that needs to be waged, against “ignorant and illiterate” immigrants living in the United States.

In justifying her and the state’s war on foreignness, Richardson focuses on two central issues, cost, and illegality. In her categorization of immigrant populations, immigrants are described as having a propensity towards crime and therefore posing an undue burden on both state and charitable apparatuses. One of Richardson’s talking points is her estimated cost of immigrants, which she states is over a million dollars. The million-dollar sum, she argued, was the cost for “crimes committed, sickness, poverty, and unemployment of these immigrants”¹¹⁵ By lumping together crime and unemployment, with sickness and poverty she links these actions as illegal and as issues solved simply by teaching the English language. Her focus on the power of the English language as a universal solution to the many facets of the “immigrant problem” is an underpinning of Americanization education efforts, which later would be thoroughly theorized and enforced by the state. In the context of World War I, foreignness becomes a threat not just to local space but to the nation and state. According to Richardson, the most effective way “for banishing illiteracy from California” was through large-scale education efforts.¹¹⁶

As large-scale educational efforts increased, they transitioned from volunteer-run organizations to state programs. In 1915, Richardson’s work in Los Angeles was well

¹¹⁵ “Ethel Richardson Leads Movement to Educate All Immigrants.”

¹¹⁶ “Ethel Richardson Leads Movement to Educate All Immigrants.”

received in San Bernardino County. In *The San Bernardino County Sun*, Mrs. G. W. Beattie the “district chairman of education of the southern federation” gave a presentation to the Daughters of the American Revolution about the issue of Mexican education. In her presentation, the paper notes that she referenced the work being performed in Los Angeles. The article boldly states that “The Mexican population is the problem which demands attention in California, and this work is the one confronting the educational department of women’s clubs.”¹¹⁷ In San Bernardino County, the “foreign” problem is not simply with the “immigrant” in general, rather, the problem is specific to the Mexican population. Identifying the foreign problem as the Mexican problem in San Bernardino is indicative of the more single-minded purpose and movement that was growing in the region. The paper goes on to note that “The day school for women now carried on in Los Angeles under the auspices of the public schools is being watched with a view to emulation elsewhere.”¹¹⁸ The Mexican day school is an early example of the sort of educational reforms that Richardson was involved with. Further, it is clear that Americanization education reform was linked closely to the public school system through their support of the program.

The public schools' support of “foreign” education was an indication of what was to come. In the following years, experimental efforts were made through night schools, factory schools, and other teaching centers in order to universalize the speaking of English, first in Los Angeles, and then throughout California. Richardson’s work in Los

¹¹⁷ “The Education Forms the Common Mind,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, December 2, 1915, Newspapers.com.

¹¹⁸ “The Education Forms the Common Mind.”

Angeles was the beginning of her budding career with the California State Department of Education. In 1920, she was asked by State Superintendent William Wood to become his deputy in charge of Americanization work thereby joining together the Commission of Immigration and Housing and the Department of Education to become the California Committee of Public Agencies for Americanization.¹¹⁹ Richardson then asked Elizabeth Keppie, formerly of LA Normal to join as her assistant. Keppie's appointment illustrates the continued connection between rural and foreign education. Through the efforts of the California Committee of Public Agencies for Americanization, Richardson and Keppie's fieldwork and Americanization theories would be spread throughout the state.¹²⁰ As noted by Raftery, "Whereas Progressive reformers, often volunteers, had been in the vanguard of initiating services at the turn of the century, volunteers had given way to professionals, and by the mid-1930's almost all services had become institutionalized."¹²¹

Professionalization led to further expansion of the bureaucracy and thereby state control over education. Later, schools and policies would be created not "under the auspices" of California's Public School system but by the system and state itself. One example of state intervention, which will be discussed in the next chapter is the Cucamonga Mexican demonstration school started by San Bernardino administrator Grace Stanley.¹²²

¹¹⁹ California State Department of Education Division of Elementary Education, "California Education Board Report 1918-1920," 1924/26 1918, California State Government Publications.

¹²⁰ The latter part of Richardson's career will be covered in chapter 4.

¹²¹ Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*, 162.

¹²² Keppie traveled to San Bernardino to meet with Stanley in order to discuss the "conditions in this county and the need for an Americanization school" that school later became the Cucamonga Demonstration School. "Hope to Have School for Americanization Open in Fall for Country Children," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, June 27, 1920, Newspapers.com, <https://universityofcaliforniariverside.newspapers.com/clip/74292578/hope-to-have-school-for-americanization/>.

In the midst of the growing professionalization and bureaucratization of education, the Commission of Immigration and Housing under the department of education was formed, and the California State Library system was becoming more and more involved in rural education reform. Under the direction of librarian James L. Gillis, the California State Library decided to expand its power outside of Sacramento and the Bay Area to spread its influence across the state. In 1909, after the successful passage of the County Library Law, librarian Harriet G. Eddy led the effort to organize county-free libraries. Eddy was tasked with establishing multiple free libraries in the most remote cities and counties in California in order to ensure that all California residents had access to books and literature.¹²³ Their efforts to provide books and sources of education in remote communities align with the Country Life education goals of providing appropriate knowledge to communities outside urban areas.

Under the supervision of Eddy, county free libraries were created in any place that would do, “general stores, hotels, gas stations, post offices, churches, schools, power plants, fraternal lodges,” and even “a converted chicken crooder, water tower, saloon and railroad boxcar.”¹²⁴ One by one, these unlikely community places became state spaces. Whereas before the main link between a small town and the state of California was through the post office, the establishment of state-created free public libraries added another state presence to remote communities across California. One of the primary ways

¹²³ Gary F. Kurutz, “‘It’s a Long Trip from Headquarters’: An Exhibit Celebrating Early County Library Service in California,” *California State Library Foundation Bulletin* 92, no. 2009 (February 12, 2019): 13.

¹²⁴ Gary F. Kurutz, 13.

these spaces were demarcated was through the “ever-present country library sign.”¹²⁵

The County Library orange sign indicated the existence of the library and the presence of the state in an increasing number of rural communities. Eddy and her colleague, May Henshall, were so committed to their library crusade, that in just nine years, over forty counties had organized county free libraries.

Creating the county free library system was no easy feat. Many of the counties, not to mention the communities, were extremely remote. Eddy and Henshall hauled books through the desert, up mountains, by sleigh in the snow, and on narrow trails by mule to bring books to these rural communities.¹²⁶ To achieve the seemingly impossible task to bring books “From the orange groves of Riverside to the snow and below zero weather of Inyo county in one night,”¹²⁷ Eddy and Henshall held onto what Kurutz calls “evangelistic zeal.” Like LA Normal teachers, members of the Bethlehem Institute, and Ethel Richardson, Eddy Henshall embodied Progressive Era missionary fervor as she devoted herself to her journey, literally climbing mountains in the pursuit of reform. The zealotry of state employees to reform, re-educate and improve rural spaces resulted in increased collaborations between the state department, facilitated the expansion of state bureaucracy, and also imposed state control on rural populations in new ways.

¹²⁵ Gary F. Kurutz, 14.

¹²⁶ Gary F. Kurutz, 18.

¹²⁷ Gary F. Kurutz, “‘It’s a Long Trip from Headquarters’: An Exhibit Celebrating Early County Library Service in California,” *California State Library Foundation Bulletin* 58, no. 1997 (March 4, 1997): 11. The statement is quoted by Kurutz from May Henshall’s writing on the back of a 1917 photograph.

The results of the county free library program reached the Mission School District in San Bernardino California. On March 14th and 30th of 1916, the Mission School District Branch and the Bryn Mawr Branch were created, respectively. Looking at the differences between these two libraries, which were a little over a mile away from each other, we can discern each library's purpose. Mission School's library opened first and in the 1916 *Notes on California Libraries*, it states that there were only twelve cardholders, with seventy-seven total volumes.¹²⁸ The small Mission School library was open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for half an hour after school, 2:30-3:00 p.m. The hours suggest that the library was available to students at Mission School for them to take home books after school. While the Mission library operated as a usual library the Bryn Mawr library was an attempt to address the foreign problem in Bryn Mawr through Americanization tactics.

The Bryn Mawr branch of the library functioned very differently. In its first few years, the Bryn Mawr branch was operated by Grace E. Curtis, the daughter of Eli Curtis, one of the main citrus growing families in the area. Unlike the Mission Branch, the library at the segregated Bryn Mawr School had much longer hours serving its eighty-four cardholders from 7:00-9:00 p.m. on Mondays and 3:00-5:00 p.m. on Fridays.¹²⁹ Additionally, the library included 285 total volumes, 37 of them fiction, 12 miscellaneous, 55 current magazines, and most peculiar, 115 books described as

¹²⁸ California State Library, *News Notes of California Libraries* ([Sacramento] California State Library, 1916), <http://archive.org/details/newsnotesofcalif11cali>.

¹²⁹ California State Library, 1045. The opening times were not a misprint, in the 1921 *California State Library News Notes of California* the hours remain the same.

“juvenile.”¹³⁰ On the back of a photograph of the Bryn Mawr School-turned-library taken



Books provided by county for Americanization work.

Figure 20: Photograph of the Bryn Mawr School with the county free library sign out in front.

(Courtesy of the California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento, California)

in May of 1922, an employee wrote: “Books provided by county for Americanization work.”¹³¹ From the photograph inscription, it is clear that the Bryn Mawr library was used for Americanization purposes. The late and unorthodox library hours, from seven to

¹³⁰ California State Library, 1045.

¹³¹ *Bryn Mawr School*, May 22, 1922, Photograph, May 22, 1922, San Bernardino County: Bryn Mawr: Schools, California State Library, California Room.

nine in the evening, indicate that the library was also used by adults, who would be busy during other hours of the day in the groves. Access to library books and also “juvenile” books, which were likely reading primers and books at basic reading levels, fit into Richardson’s vision of increased literacy among the “foreign element.” Additionally, such late opening hours also indicate the possibility of adult night classes for the Mexican community as called for by Richardson and increasingly, other Americanization proponents.¹³²

The segregated Bryn Mawr Schoolhouse was now a California Branch Library, caught in the web of state, county, and local power structures. As a county free library, the school site was linked to the California State Library system. As Kurutz states, the country free library effort did help the state “establish a foothold in these remote rural locations in California.”¹³³ The state’s foothold was not just in rural locations, for a library at Mission School would have fulfilled this agenda, it was also a foothold in a specific racial geography. The creation of county free libraries helped solidify California state presence in Bryn Mawr’s Mexican neighborhood, a foreign rurality. The role of the library went beyond a simple presence, it was also meant to help achieve state goals, the end of illiteracy, and increasingly, Americanization and the creation of citizens in these

¹³² Scholars have thoroughly proven that adult education programs were a central part of Americanization efforts. Reformers viewed the parents and especially mothers as a means to transform the entire family unit. In my work I focus on the education of children, but for more on the subject of adult education see: chapter 5 “Americanizing village Adults” in González, *Labor and Community*; Chapter 2 “Confronting ‘America’” in Vicki L. Ruíz, “South by Southwest: Mexican Americans and Segregated Schooling, 1900-1950,” *OAH Magazine of History* 15, no. 2 (2001): 23–27; and Chapter 3 “John H. Francis, Albert Shiels, Mary S. Gibson: The Tensions of Reform” in Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*.

¹³³ Gary F. Kurutz, “‘It’s a Long Trip from Headquarters’: An Exhibit Celebrating Early County Library Service in California,” March 4, 1997, 18.

foreign spaces. Not only was state authority present, but county power was also expressed, as the back of the 1922 photograph states that the Americanization books were provided by the county, rather than the state. As state bureaucracy expanded, so too did county power and bureaucracy.

The final layer is local control. For eighteen years, women from the Curtis family were custodians of the library. Grace Curtis was the first librarian, and in 1919 Grace Curtis's mother Jennie Curtis took over operations of the library and operated it until her retirement in 1934.¹³⁴ Considering the Curtis family's clout in the Bryn Mawr area due to the considerable citrus acreage they owned, they were key power holders in the Bryn Mawr citrus country town structure. They were the landowners, employers, and now educators of the Mexican and Mexican American population in Bryn Mawr. Through these positions, they attempted to control, subvert, and limit the power and opportunities afforded to the Mexican and Mexican American residents of Bryn Mawr. These multiple layers of power and authority at the state, county, and local levels contrived to control and thereby solve the problem of foreign rurality.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown how early educators in California collapsed the issues of foreign and rural education, mapping the threat of immigrants onto rural space. In creating the "problem" of foreign rurality, educators and administrators alike justified

¹³⁴ "Jennie Curtis Funeral Fixed For Thursday," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, August 14, 1936, Newspapers.com.

the expansion of their power and authority as the solution to the issue of foreign rurality. While I discuss rural education solely in the context of Southern California, the issue of foreign rurality may have wider implications. As Francisco Balderrama and Raymond Rodriguez have noted, Mexican immigration in the United States was not confined to the Southwest. “By the 1920s Mexicans could be found harvesting sugar beets in Minnesota, laying railroad tracks in Kansas, packing meat in Chicago, mining coal in Oklahoma, assembling cars in Detroit, canning fish in Alaska, and sharecropping in Louisiana.”¹³⁵ Given the proliferation of Mexican immigration, it seems likely that other rural spaces outside of California may have also formulated their own educational “problems” along with proposed solutions. More regional studies of Mexican school segregation using the lens of rural education will help scholars understand if the issue of foreign rurality was a larger trend or California-specific policy, and in either case, expand our understanding of how schools contributed to regional racial formation in rural space.

The early efforts by state officials, LA Normal educators, and county officials to identify the rural school problem in California and formulate a reform plan was the prelude to increased bureaucratic power among state and county education officials. The 1920s saw the further expansion of state and county authority and power, which would be maintained into the 1940s. Chapter 4 will further analyze the relationship between county and state educational bureaucracy by investigating the emergence of a particular Americanization strategy put forward by San Bernardino County Superintendent Grace

¹³⁵ Francisco E. Balderrama, *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s* /, 1st ed. (Albuquerque: c1995.), 6, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015046834902>.

Stanley. Her Americanization policies stemmed from the work of teachers and students at LA Normal and state workers, who assessed and internalized the racial geography of rural California. By the 1920s, the idea of rural space as Mexican space became further developed and resulted in expansions of state and county authority that reached beyond these early efforts in the first decade of the twentieth century.

CHAPTER 4: The Rise of Benevolent Americanization
Education in San Bernardino County and Beyond, 1916-1930

By the mid-1910s it was clear to growers, residents, and educators that the Inland Empire's rural spaces were permanently home to large non-white populations. While in my previous chapters I separated the issues of education and the citrus industry, this chapter illustrates the ways in which educational policy was used to support the citrus industry and thereby the status quo of the rural citrus country town. The issue of foreign rurality, as I argued in the previous chapter, spurred many educators and administrators on a reform crusade. As cries for solving the problem of foreign rurality mounted, growers were again confronted with an outcry over their source of cheap labor. In the same way that growers felt the need to justify the presence of Mexican laborers and illustrate control over Mexican families living in their towns, growers needed a soothing solution to the issue of "foreign" education in their rural communities. In this chapter I trace the ways in which local educational policies, created to support the citrus country town rural way of life and racial capitalism, were exported to the state level, thereby altering state approaches towards Mexican education.

One of the growers who sought to craft the ideal solution to the educational issue of foreign rurality was Mission District citrus grower Grace C. Stanley. Stanley was a well-known resident in the Mission District and nearby Redlands, active in charitable circles and women's auxiliaries, and the owner of bountiful citrus acreage.¹ She was also

¹ "Board of Education Pays Honor to Mrs. Stanley, Early Educator," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, June 24, 1966.

the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (1915-1922), the California Commissioner of Elementary Education (1923-1925), and the creator of the Cucamonga State Demonstration School (1920-1925) which focused on “pioneering” education methods for Mexican pupils. Unfortunately, her educational career is often misrepresented by scholars. Most refer to Stanley simply as a teacher or instructor and ignore the fact that she held significant administrative positions at the local and state level, giving her considerable authority over the education of the Mexican and Mexican Americans in California.² Analyzing her career and educational philosophies as a proclaimed “expert” in Americanization uncovers critical links between gendered benevolence, the rise of bureaucratic educational professionalism, and the racial capitalism of the citrus labor regime.

In the late 1910s and throughout the 1920s, Stanley developed and enforced a unique type of Americanization pedagogy, which I term *Benevolent Americanization*.³ Benevolent Americanization was a calculated policy that promoted segregation, individual education (pedagogy focused on meeting the perceived “needs” of each

² Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed*; González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, and Amanda Marie Liang, “Inland Empire Schools and Mendez v. Westminster,” 2012,

³ Stanley did not refer to her pedagogy as “Benevolent Americanization” this is a name I give to her work. Stanley, like many Progressive educators viewed their work broadly as part of the Progressive movement, often referring to their ideas as simply “Progressive education” or “education in the Progressive style.” However, as Cremin observes in his seminal study of Progressive education, “the movement [Progressive education] was marked from the very beginning by a pluralistic, frequently contradictory, character. The reader will search these pages in vain for any capsule definition of progressive education. None exist, and none ever will; for throughout its history progressive education meant different things to different people, and these differences were only compounded by the remarkable diversity of American education.” As we look back at Stanley’s policy it is helpful not to simply place it within the vast umbrella of Progressive education, but to name this particular configuration. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School; Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957.*, x.

individual student), and vocational training while downplaying issues like disease and violence to safeguard the growers' supply of cheap labor. Stanley's strategy relied on promoting the transformational possibilities of maternalism to promote the view that Mexican students only needed proper mothering to become the ideal manual laborer and therefore a "benefit" to the white community.

I use the term *Benevolent Americanization* for three reasons. Firstly, because in the historiographical literature this Americanization tactic has been categorized as a well-meaning ideology that inadvertently fell into "the same prejudices that motivated the overt racists."⁴ Simply put, because of the language of benevolence previous scholars have viewed Stanley's Americanization policy as being concerned primarily with the needs of the Mexican community rather than as a calculated racial, economic, and social policy. Secondly, analysis of Stanley's career borrows from the plentiful literature on white women and benevolence which reframed Victorian and Antebellum benevolent activity (charity and volunteer work) as a politics of race, morality, and class.⁵ As Lori

⁴ González defined two types of justifications, overt racism and as a policy which "viewed segregation as the preferred method of meeting the educational needs of the Mexican community. They often considered this practice an educational asset for the Mexican community." In his description González includes quotations from Grace C. Stanley's treatise on Americanization. However, without knowledge of Stanley's history and personal life he fails to see how her ideas were motivated by ulterior motives. González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 15.

⁵ Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States*, Yale Historical Publications (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Linda Gordon, *Women, the State, and Welfare* (Wisconsin, UNITED STATES: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucr/detail.action?docID=3445267>; Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/002058219>; Regina G. Kunzel, *Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1890-1945*, Yale Historical Publications (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Linda J. Rynbrandt, "The 'Ladies of the Club' and Caroline Bartlett Crane: Affiliation and Alienation in Progressive Social Reform," *Gender and Society* 11, no. 2 (1997): 200–214; Amy Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity," *American Literature* 70, no. 3 (1998): 581–606, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2902710>.

Ginzberg eloquently stated in her seminal work *Women and the Work of Benevolence*, “Middle and upper-middle-class women of the antebellum era shared a language that described their benevolent work as Christian, their means as fundamentally moral, and their mandate as uniquely feminine.”⁶ In the name of feminine moral authority based on maternalism, women engaged in charity, social work, societal reform, and politics all the while upholding and forming, middle-class identity and racial systems of control. As Kaplan has argued, the politics of white female domesticity stretched beyond the nominal “home” to the “nation” as home, “The empire of the mother thus shares the logic of American empire; both follow a double compulsion to conquer and domesticate the foreign, thus incorporating and controlling a threatening foreignness within the borders of the home and the nation.”⁷ The work of benevolence is the work of empire, tied inextricably to race, class, and politics. This brings me to the third reason I chose this term, as a reference to the United States “mission” of “benevolent assimilation” towards the Philippines as proclaimed by President McKinley in 1898 which served to erase the brutality and horrors of American control over the Philippines.⁸ *Benevolent Americanization* brings together discussion of Progressivism, gendered benevolence, California racial politics, and U.S. Imperial ambitions. Stanley, as a woman engaged in the process of Americanization, actively relied on assumptions about white female moral authority as well as women’s “domestic” duties as she built her “benevolent” pedagogy

⁶ Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*, 1.

⁷ Kaplan, “Manifest Domesticity,” 591.

⁸ Stuart Creighton Miller, *“Benevolent Assimilation”: The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899-1903* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

which sought to achieve imperialistic goals by “taming the wild, the natural, and the alien.”⁹

Benevolent Americanization operated at the intersection between benevolence and Progressivism.¹⁰ I do so because the particulars of women's involvement in professional (rather than volunteer or philanthropic) Americanization attempts have remained understudied. Stanley's work was unique because it blended the “club woman mentality” found in women's benevolent clubs and organizations with the transition to “scientific” professionalism occurring during the Progressive Era.¹¹ As Americanization scholar Christina Ziegler-McPherson argues about Mary Gibson, a volunteer turned professional reformer, “She moved easily between the two worlds of public male politics and private female organizations.”¹² Stanley, an educational professional for her entire life, blended the two worlds and was comfortable in the world of politics.¹³ By looking at

⁹ Kaplan, “Manifest Domesticity,” 582.

¹⁰ Kunzel details the shifting power of benevolence in detail in her book, “Trading the explicitly gendered language of evangelical reformed for the ostensibly gender-neutral, objective, rational, and scientific language of professionalism, social workers articulated the reform outlook of a new generation of women. Maternity homes - which were once shelters dedicated to the redemption and reclamation of “fallen women” - were not redefined by social workers as places of scientific treatment. Rather than unfortunate “sisters” to be “saved,” unmarried mothers became “problem girls” to be “treated.” Kunzel, *Fallen Women, Problem Girls*, 2; Ginzberg also traces the shift in benevolence, “Ideals of female propriety and descriptions of home - both traditional areas for paeans to benevolent femininity - were quickly merged with the new language of efficiency and professionalism.” but that there was a return during the Progressive Era, “Not until the Progressive decades would elite Protestant women such as Grace Hoadley Dodge and Jane Adams again infuse social reform with the rhetoric of female virtue and moral righteousness.” Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence* 198, 216.

¹¹ Rynbrandt, “The ‘Ladies of the Club’ and Caroline Bartlett Crane.”

¹² Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States*, 73.

¹³ As professionalism increased and the government took control of what used to belong to the “domestic sphere” women entered politics. Gordon argues, “Much of women's traditional activities - as guardians of health, morals, and cleanliness - had been appropriated (and poorly pursued) by city governments. But these activists continued to belong to women's sphere: if performed by government, then women belonged in government and politics. These arguments fed into a feminization of political life.” Gordon, *Women, the State, and Welfare*, 107.

Stanley, a different story about the relationship between women, Americanization, morals, professionalization, and profit arises.

On the whole, the role of white female education administrators in the creation of Americanization pedagogy in California is understudied.¹⁴ The only female school administrator who has received significant attention is Ethel Richardson, first a local Americanization figure in Los Angeles, then a member of the California Commission of Immigration and Housing, and finally in the State Education Department as the head of Adult Education. Richardson used her experience in social work to get a position in education. As seen in the previous chapter, women from many different levels of government and education were engaged in the process of Americanization. Women such as Elizabeth Keppie who revamped rural education at LA Normal School, and Harriet G. Eddy and May Henshall who traversed all of California to set up county free libraries, all actively shaped Americanization policy. In many cases, it was their on-the-ground experiences that produced the data used to craft state policy. Grace C. Stanley has only received brief mentions in the literature thus far.¹⁵ Assessing the career of Stanley,

¹⁴ Raftery in her study of Los Angeles focuses on the role of women particularly as teachers, volunteers, and organizers peripheral to education such as Mary S. Gibson. Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*. Within the scholarship on California school segregation, if women are mentioned it is usually in the context of volunteer work and philanthropy. For more see García's third chapter "Friends of the Mexicans? Mexican Immigration and the Politics of Social Reform" in which he discusses the founding of a reform organization Friends of the Mexicans. He briefly mentions Stanley in relationship to the Friends of the Mexicans. Matt García, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 89-120.

¹⁵ Gilbert González was the first to mention Stanley, and other scholars simply re-used his analysis of her. González mentions Stanley's Americanization policies in his study on Chicano education. It was only later that Matt García cites her work in reference to the Friends of Mexicans Program. González misrepresents Stanley twice. First introducing her as simply a "teacher" and then describing her as "formerly of the Los Angeles School District." In both cases, he fails to mention her tenure in the San Bernardino County Schools' upper administration. Citing the State of California Thirty-First Biennial Report, he indicates that

however, offers a different perspective bridging the gap between secondary source literature on benevolence, Progressive Era professionalization, Mexican school segregation, and the history of education.¹⁶

This chapter is not just the story of an individual educator, it provides insight into California's education policy. I trace how Grace Stanley spread Benevolent Americanization policy to state and local administrators and how she successfully created a network of like-minded reformers. As the state played a larger role in California public education, particularly in rural areas, the state adopted tactics, experiments, and policies that were initially crafted by local educators.¹⁷ Particularly in San Bernardino County, these Americanization experiments were spearheaded by the county superintendents of

her assignment as State Commissioner of Elementary Education was to create a station of experiments at Cucamonga in the instruction of Mexican schools. He further adds that “it was from this point that teaching methods were recommended throughout the state.” González presents Stanley’s work as evidence of Los Angeles area policy rather than situating Stanley in the context of San Bernardino and Redlands, this was perhaps a simple mistake but illustrates the field’s continued disregard for the Inland Empire. As State Commissioner of Elementary Education, Stanley was actively engaged in shaping elementary school policy across the state of California, a fitting platform for her Americanization strategies. González, *Labor and Community*, 1994, 15, 19.

¹⁶ This chapter is not just a “recovery project” to use education historian Kathleen Weiler’s phrase in her historiography of gender and Progressive education. She argues that previous scholars “followed what might be called the ‘woman’s recovery project’.” This body of work has made an important contribution in uncovering the contributions of women educators but in many cases these studies have taken an uncritical and even romantic approach to their subjects... This article suggests that historians of education need to go beyond the recovery project of writing the stories of those who have been ‘hidden from history’, in Sheila Rowbotham’s words, to an analysis of the process of gendering - in the educational sites we study and in the writing of history as an intellectual enterprise.” I agree that remaining uncritical of gender and its processes produces romantic histories. Kathleen Weiler, “The Historiography of Gender and Progressive Education in the United States,” *Paedagogica Historica* 42, no. 1–2 (February 1, 2006): 161, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00309230600552096>.

¹⁷ In Ziegler-McPherson’s assessment of Americanization in California she argues that “Although the California Commission of Immigration and Housing, The University of California, and normal schools trained Americanization by the dozens, the state Department of Education never completely embraced the concept of *immigrant* education.” A possible explanation for the lack of explicitly “immigrant” education at the state level may be that elementary Americanization reform occurred under the guise of rural education. Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States*, 141.

San Bernardino, with support from local citrus agribusiness elites.¹⁸ By focusing on how local policy became state policy, I illustrate the importance of regional history to the larger history of California.

Grace Stanley

Grace Stanley was born Grace Lucinda Chandler in 1877 in Smith Center, Kansas. Stanley was a member of the generation Ginzberg has called, “the children and grandchildren of antebellum reformers” who enacted reform in an environment that emphasized “business skill and an unsentimental analysis of social ills.”¹⁹ Stanley, like others in her generation, blended the old form of benevolence with Progressive Era managerial professionalism. Stanley graduated from Stanford University in 1895 and moved to Southern California where she spent time teaching in Los Angeles and Long Beach. She was part of an increasing number of women who saw themselves as professionals. As Raftery argues in her work on Americanization in LA, over the course of the twentieth century’s second decade, Americanization went from volunteer-run initiatives to official programs run by professionals. She suggests a correlation between increased college education among women with them “see[ing] themselves as professionals either in education or related fields, as qualified as any other to have their say in policy matters.”²⁰ Stanley was a professionally trained teacher with an eye for

¹⁸ At the time there were two different types of superintendents, the “county” and “city” superintendents. county superintendents took administrative charge of the entire county often over large areas. City superintendents were more specialized and focused on particularly urban areas and large cities within the county’s jurisdiction. Blount, *Destined to Rule the Schools*.

¹⁹ Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*, 10.

²⁰ Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*, 19.

administration, in 1903 she became the principal of Mission School in Bryn Mawr, California. She would continue to see herself as a professional throughout her career, this would inform her mix of professionalism and benevolence.

During her teaching career, she married Percy D. Stanley in 1906 in Los Angeles and together they made a home in the Mission District where Percy and his mother Ida Stanley owned a considerable amount of citrus acreage.²¹ As a married woman, she was prohibited from teaching.²² While Stanley was prohibited from teaching for a few years after her marriage, she raised her three sons while maintaining an active presence in the community through Bull Moose Party political organizing and participation in various women's clubs and charities. Her actions indicate political involvement and commitment to progressivist ideology. Stanley was highly political and fused her professionalism in education with politics. Stanley's political activism was not necessarily unique. In Gayle Gullett's article, "Women Progressives and the Politics of Americanization in California," she argues that women utilized Americanization efforts to negotiate their own citizenship. Crucially, Gullett observes that "The Americanization campaign, they [Progressive women] concluded, offered them a vehicle for sponsoring legislation, managing programs, and even holding office – in short, for achieving full citizenship."²³ She ties her analysis of Americanization to the suffrage movement and women's pursuit

²¹ Their home was in the Terracina subdivision of the Mission District a little under a mile east of "downtown" Bryn Mawr.

²² The law barring married women from teaching was overturned in 1929 in *Dutart v. Woodward*. However, there is some debate as to how extensively the law prohibiting married women from teaching was enforced. Raftery, *Land of Fair Promise*, 88.

²³ Gayle Gullett, "Women Progressives and the Politics of Americanization in California, 1915-1920," *Pacific Historical Review* 64, no. 1 (1995): 74, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3640335>.

of political power. After Stanley's husband died in 1911, she became a politically active landowning widow in charge of significant citrus acreage.²⁴

Stanley inherited about eighteen acres of citrus groves in the Mission District. Nearly seven of the acres were owned by the Percy Stanley Estate, which she oversaw until her three sons were given control of the land in 1934. Stanley also controlled her mother-in-law's 10.4 acres of citrus trees. In the late 1930s, both groves contained a total of 4,130 citrus trees. With only three young sons, an elderly mother-in-law, and herself, it is clear that the groves were not maintained by the family. The Stanleys, like most other growers in the Mission District, relied on the use of contracted Mexican citrus picking crews to make the groves profitable. With these land and agricultural assets, Grace Stanley was one of the grower elites. Her and her family's wealth relied upon the citrus industry.²⁵

Within the literature on California Americanization and segregation, reformers and growers are viewed as two separate classes focused on distinct goals. As García argues. "Friends of the Mexicans, in particular, articulated the position of residents who

²⁴ Coincidentally that same year California passed women's suffrage.

²⁵ Again, the literature on benevolence is useful here. As Ginzberg forcefully argued in her work, the politics of class were inherently tied into benevolent work and, as she argues, were even central in forming middle class ideology. As Stephanie Jones-Rogers has convincingly argued in the context of the antebellum south, secondary source literature often focuses on women's position as moral guides rather than attribute economic motivations to their actions. However, "If we examine women's economic investments in slavery, rather than simply their ideological and sentimental connections to the system, we can uncover hitherto hidden relationships among gender, slavery, and capitalism." While Jones-Rogers' analysis focuses on slavery, the citrus industry also relied on a form of labor exploitation. Analyzing white middle class women's role in California's agricultural exploitation is critical. Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers, *They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South* (Yale University Press, 2019); Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*.

approached the subject of Mexican immigration from a cultural, rather than an economic, standpoint. Townspeople viewed the presence of Mexican immigrants primarily as a cultural "problem" and not as a source of labor and economic stability"²⁶ It has been largely understood that growers were preoccupied with economics while reformers concentrated on culture. However, this is a false dichotomy. While other scholars have labeled Stanley as a Progressive educator, they were only partially correct. Stanley, and many other women and educators, were invested in the citrus industry and more importantly, invested in keeping labor costs to a minimum. Grace Stanley was able to mobilize Progressive Era gender conventions to her own economic advantage, particularly by enabling the continuance of the extractive citrus labor market in her own community and region.

As a prominent community member and grove owner in the Mission District, Stanley was one of the elites within the country town social system. As detailed in chapter 1, the country town social system consolidated political, racial, and economic power among the rural wealthy and white citrus growing elite creating a small insular network of persons and families who sought to control nearly all aspects of life. As an elite, she worked to secure the citrus country town ideal of white rural utopia and maintain the racial capitalism of citrus agriculture. Many of the local newspaper clippings describe her political activities and her inner circle reads as a who's-who of the local citrus elite, including the Hinkley family of grove owners, police officers, and

²⁶ García, *A World of Its Own*, 113.

strikebreakers like Theodore Krumm, city officials such as Chamber of Commerce head A. E. Isham, and others. Soon, her local network would expand to a county-wide and later state-wide network of educators and policymakers. Her network revolved around Progressive education reform, the citrus industry, and maintaining the citrus country town.

Although Grace Stanley was prohibited from teaching, that did not mean that all jobs in the education field were off-limits. There were no laws against married, and in her case, widowed women working in education administration. Grace Stanley returned to work in 1915 as A.S. McPherron's Deputy Superintendent of Schools. After McPherron retired, Grace Stanley became the third female superintendent of county schools in San Bernardino for the 1915-1916 school year.²⁷ San Bernardino County had previously elected two women as superintendents: first Margaret Mogeau in 1893-1898 as a Populist nominee then, Lulu Claire Bahr in 1899-1901, a former teacher at Mission School. As education scholar Jackie Blount argues in her study of women in superintendent roles, the superintendency was initially created as a higher paid and more prestigious refuge for male teachers during the transition of teaching into a "women's" profession, but many

²⁷ Unlike others before her, Stanley first came to power through appointment rather than through election. In 1912, the San Bernardino Charter had been amended to allow the elected board of supervisors to appoint all county officers including the Superintendent of County Schools. However, by late 1915 the rule had been overturned, and Stanley still retained her position as County Superintendent. It is, of course, unclear if she would have become the superintendent if she had run for office rather than been appointed, but she maintained the superintendency through several general elections until 1920. See: Smith, Gerald Arthur, *History of the County School Administration of San Bernardino County, California*, 255. "By this action the provision which resulted in the appointment of Mrs. Stanley as county superintendent of schools was changed by amendment almost before she assumed her duties."

women rose to the rank of superintendent.²⁸ There were two types of superintendents, “city” and “country” superintendents with “city” superintendents being viewed as more prestigious. As Bolunt observes, the role of “county” superintendent proved more accessible for women, but within these more rural and less prestigious positions, women like Stanley could build considerable power and reach.²⁹

County superintendents were crucial educational administrators who served as a link between local communities and the state. They oversaw the day-to-day operations like funding, enforcing compulsory education, creating schools and school districts, and creating school programming.³⁰ During the Progressive Era in which educators were emphasizing educational professionalization, the superintendent’s powers grew significantly. As Blount noted, “Part of the growing responsibility experienced by country superintendents came from above as state education agencies granted them increased authority.”³¹ As stated in the previous chapter, the tenure of A.S. McPherron

²⁸ "In 1896, women held 228 county superintendencies, two state superintendents, and twelve city superintendencies. Just five years later, the *Report of the Commissioner of Education* indicated that 288 women held county superintendencies for a 26 percent increase. By 1913, there were 495 women county supernatants - more than doubling the 1896 figure in less than twenty years." Blount, *Destined to Rule the Schools*, 71.

²⁹ "Even though many of these women superintendents served in small or rural county school systems typically deemed undesirable by men, nonetheless women ambitious for educational leadership were urged to go west to seek these opportunities." Blount, 2.

³⁰ "The county school superintendent evolved not from grassroots school organization, but rather was created to assist state superintendents in overseeing distribution of state funds and in assuring local school compliance with state laws. Most states and territories established county school systems with superintendencies in the mid to late 1800s. County superintendents performed several key functions with some state-by-state variation. First, they channeled state funds to local schools. Second, county superintendents became indispensable partners in compiling school statistics because they could more easily visit isolated schoolhouses to verify information than could state officials. They counted students, reported conditions of outhouses, and described the usability of wood stoves. As populations shifted and land use changed, county superintendents also assumed the heinous task of adjusting school district lines, a matter that frequently triggered bitter feuds among communities." Blount, 42.

³¹ Blount, 43.

was critical in vastly expanding the role of the superintendent beyond its original clerical purpose. However, during Stanley's tenure, she would further the power of the superintendent so much so that San Bernardino County Education Researcher Gerald Arthur Smith observes, "Mrs. Grace C. Stanley's dynamic leadership organized the pattern of activity for the office of the county superintendent of San Bernardino which was to follow for the next decade."³² As the links between local superintendents and the state educational bureaucracy increased, so too did the flow of educational ideologies and policy. Stanley, as superintendent, was positioned at the crossroads between local and state interests. Her leadership and educational theories would not just change education in the county but would also affect statewide education initiatives and further the increase in bureaucratic power exercised by the department of education.

In Stanley's case, local issues were grower issues of labor and profit, both of which were tied into the "Mexican Problem." Local researcher Gerald Arthur Smith observed in his *History of the County School Administration of San Bernardino County* that there was a continued history of superintendents, including McPherron and Grace Stanley, being backed by Redlands elites, they themselves being members of the community.³³ At that time the Redlands elite was synonymous with the business leaders in Redlands, namely the wealthy citrus growers and packinghouse owners. These

³² Smith, Gerald Arthur, *History of the County School Administration of San Bernardino County, California*, 271.

³³ "The new charter... resulted in the placing of the Board of Supervisors under considerable pressure from various political groups. The political plum of the office of the County Superintendent of Schools fell to Redlands." Gerald Arthur Smith, *History of the County School Administration of San Bernardino County, California* (San Bernardino County Historical Society, 1954), 257.

powerful agribusiness men had a vested interest in schooling, in particular, the schooling of their future laborers, the majority of whom were Mexican and Mexican American. As an educator with substantial power, Stanley worked diligently to employ Benevolent Americanization and individual education policy, methods that entrenched unequal educational structures in order to maintain a cheap and reproducible labor supply. As an administrator of a rural area, she was able to position her educational theories as the solution to solve the vexing state problem of foreign rurality while maintaining grower interests. In so doing, she posed herself as an administrative expert in rural and Mexican education, transforming a peripheral rural district into a considerable seat power.³⁴

The Origins of Benevolent Americanization

A newspaper article from 1917 indicates that in San Bernardino County the “Mexican Problem” was at the forefront of administrators’ and parents’ minds. On May 12th of that year, Stanley held a PTA roundtable to discuss “(a) ‘the Mexican Problem in our Schools.’ (b) ‘In What Lines do Mexican Children Show Most Ability?’ (c) ‘Occupations of Parents.’ (d) ‘Will Children be Fitted to Follow Same Occupation?’”³⁵

The list of discussion topics indicates that concerns related to labor are central to the issue of Mexican education in San Bernardino County. Concerns and fears often held by white communities like language ability, sanitation, and disease are not included in the

³⁴ During the professionalization frenzy of the Progressive Era, it was not just men who took on the position of “expert.” For instance, in discussing the career of Caroline Bartlett Crane, Linda Rynbrandt argues that, “Not unlike her academic male mentors in early sociology, she also attempted to carve out a professional niche for herself as an “expert” in scientific municipal sanitation.” Rynbrandt, “The ‘Ladies of the Club’ and Caroline Bartlett Crane,” 208.

³⁵ “County PTA Federation Meet Saturday at Cucamonga,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, May 9, 1917.

article's list. The newspaper's early focus on the importance of Mexican children as future laborers indicates that concerns over Mexican's "productivity" within American society were foundational to San Bernardino policy. Later in the mid-1920s, these priorities and the strategies to realize them would spread throughout Southern California.

In 1919, there is already evidence of a county-wide Americanization program being successfully implemented in San Bernardino County. A newspaper article mentions the existence of the San Bernardino Americanization Committee. The article states: "Among the first things which those who gathered to discuss this problem thought necessary was a school of instruction for teachers who are to take up the work of Americanizing the Mexicans. In this way, it is hoped that competent instructors can be secured to handle the foreign element."³⁶ Generally in California, "the foreign element" was used to refer to "foreigners" but, in San Bernardino, "the foreign element" was a proxy for "Mexicans" whether or not they were foreign-born. Handling "the foreign element" included the education of both parents and children as a method to indoctrinate the entire family unit. Evidence of the successful implementation of these programs is observed in March of 1919 in which the work of enrolling 175 Mexican men in the district is described by *The San Bernardino County Sun* as "worthwhile and the field for expansion is tempting."³⁷ The "temptation" of expanded Americanization efforts was surely seductive and taken up by various San Bernardino County School administrators such as Merton Hill, whose work will be discussed at length later in this chapter. Only a

³⁶ "Americanization Plans Discussed." *The San Bernardino County Sun*. March 13, 1919.

³⁷ "Education Topic of Study Section Program," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, March 13, 1919.

year after the above newspaper article, Stanley would create and run a “Mexican Experimental School” in Cucamonga. The early implementation of Americanization programs would lay the groundwork for larger studies on Americanization and the continual creation of more “effective” programs.

As a superintendent and a state administrator, Stanley’s priority was to create a “school” of Americanization, which ultimately resulted in a network of school administrators, agricultural business owners, professors, and students. Their mutual support formed the core of the county’s Americanization philosophy which continued under subsequent superintendents. As superintendent, Stanley held significant power and was a regular at many statewide education conferences. As fitting for a lady of her time, she held a “softer” view of Americanization, stressing the Mexican and Mexican Americans’ desire to be segregated and the positive effects of “custom” education.³⁸ In her own treatise of Americanization, “Special Schools for Mexicans,” Stanley attempts to distance her more “enlightened” version of segregation from what she calls “the selfish viewpoint of the English-speaking public [that] are based largely on the theory that the Mexican is a menace to the health and morals of the rest of the community.”³⁹ By articulating her stance against the established reasons for segregation Stanley carves a path for Benevolent Americanization an ideology that achieves the same ends while

³⁸ González briefly notes her role in embodying what Peggy Pascoe called “Victorian female moral authority.” Stanley is one of many of these Progressive Era women however, through her position she had considerable say in the shaping of Americanization public schools. González notes that she was a “Americanization specialist with the State Board of Public Instruction.” González, *Labor and Community*, 89 and 109.

³⁹ Grace C Stanley, “Special Schools for Mexicans,” *The Survey* 44 (September 14, 1920): 715.

adhering to the needs of citrus industrialists like herself. Her theories earned her a seat at the table and propelled her professional success and helped other women further their educational careers.

At first glance, Benevolent Americanization seems sympathetic to the plight of Mexican communities. However, as scholars of antebellum benevolence Ginzberg has argued, “The emphasis on benevolence as peculiarly female ‘impulse from the heart’ removed from crass economic considerations, tended to conceal the fact that benevolence and money went hand in hand.”⁴⁰ Although the rhetoric of benevolence attempted to obscure the political and economic motivations behind the work, they were ever-present. As discussed in chapters one and two, California’s citrus regime fused economy, politics, and social class together in what I call the country town social system, and this extended to the schools. As historian Gilbert González observed “schools were recapitulating the migration of Mexicans to the U.S. as a supply of flexible and cheap labor. As such, segregation was the outcome of policy decisions corresponding to the dominant economic interests of the Anglo community, and reflected as well a political method of domination and control- the antithesis of equality and freedom.”⁴¹ Within the country town social system, of which Stanley was a part, the politics of the middle class were thoroughly entwined with agribusiness. The work of benevolence should not be separated from its white middle-class context, as during the Progressive Era the middle-class

⁴⁰ Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*, 42.

⁴¹ Gilbert G. González, “Segregation of Mexican Children in a Southern California City: The Legacy of Expansionism and the American Southwest,” *The Western Historical Quarterly* 16, no. 1 (1985): 58.

reformers sought to preserve and enforce white middle-class mores onto others.⁴² Further, the Progressive Era also saw the collaboration between social reformers and agricultural interests. Vaught, in his analysis of Northern California growers, attests that “The expanding authority of the Progressive state during the Hiram Johnson administration (1911-1917) provided both social reformers and growers with new institutional means of expression.”⁴³ The educational bureaucracy was expanding and educators like Stanley could use the state’s expanding power to make large-scale changes that would benefit their interests in agriculture and education.

As I argue in chapter 2, tensions between citrus labor’s dependence on Mexican labor and the desire to create a white citrus country town space created conflict and anxiety. To maintain the status quo, growers needed to shore up support for continued Mexican labor. García and other scholars have demonstrated that residents who were not invested in the citrus industry began to push back against the presence of Mexicans in the area. In the midst of labor tensions, Benevolent Americanization was Stanley’s attempt at a salve. Her policy sought to reorient the way the public viewed the “Mexican Problem.” Rather than view Mexican residents as a threat she attempted to reframe the community as a useful and docile people. Stanley’s strategy of benevolence is easily exposed as self-serving and indicative of the partnership between the county school officials and the

⁴² “Charity Organization Societies’ emphasis on science and business helped transform the discourse over benevolence from one about gender to one about class at a time of growing conservatism and class awareness on the part of the Protestant middle and upper-middle classes. No longer something to transcend through virtue, class standing was now understood explicitly by the benevolent as something to protect.” Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*, 198.

⁴³ Vaught, *Cultivating California*, 132.

citrus industrialists. Outright racial segregation and extreme racial rhetoric, if espoused by the school officials could inflame preexisting popular passions. Stanley's soothing rhetoric was necessary to prevent another series of immigration restriction measures like those that were carried out against the Chinese and Japanese with the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and the 1892 Geary Act. These immigration restrictions resulted in a catastrophic citrus labor shortage, which was only alleviated due to increased Mexican immigration. Instead, Stanley, whose family and political power base relied on a continued supply of cheap citrus labor, attempted to soothe the "Mexican Problem" by framing the issue delicately and focusing on improvement through Americanization. Americanization programs became the employers' shield to soothe the fears of many that Mexicans were an "insoluble racial problem."⁴⁴

In the Inland Empire, the collaboration between local school officials and business leaders, many of whom held positions on school boards, created a system of segregation that used the language of benevolence to solve what Kaplan calls a "major contradiction of imperialism." For Kaplan, imperialism "while it strove to nationalize and domesticate foreign territories and people, annexation incorporated nonwhite foreign subjects in a way perceived to undermine the nation as a domestic space."⁴⁵ In order for the work of empire to continue, the realm of the domestic must be fortified. The domestic, in the case of the citrus belt, was the idealized white rural utopia of the country town. Within the theory of Benevolent Americanization, the perceived protective powers

⁴⁴ González, *Labor and Community*, 122.

⁴⁵ Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity," 585.

of maternalism could successfully domesticate the Mexican and in so doing provide comfort and reassurance to white residents that the citrus country town maintained its rural whiteness.

The Pedagogy of Benevolent Americanization in San Bernardino

In 1920, Grace Stanley published her first article outlining her philosophies for Mexican education. The work, entitled “Special Schools for Mexicans” was published in the professional social work journal *The Survey*.⁴⁶ In her work, she formalizes the ideas of Benevolent Americanization and ties her Americanization philosophies to the emerging movement for individual education.⁴⁷ Rather than focus on the education of a generalized “immigrant” population, Stanley’s article, as well as her life’s work, was centered on Mexican education. Throughout her career, she worked to formulate theories about Mexican children specifically. Her stances were circulated among educational leaders and influenced other professionals like Ethel Richardson and Merton Hill. Later, when Stanley retired as San Bernardino County superintendent and joined the State Education Department, she continued to implement these ideas and solidify a state

⁴⁶ *The Survey* was the preeminent Progressive publication, “*The Survey* crystalized a systematic approach to reform that redefined “social work” as a species of social engineering. The task became remaking man-made environments by identifying the problem in the “community machinery” and recommending specific solutions.” Stromquist, *Reinventing “The People.”*”

⁴⁷ Stanley’s pedagogy engaged in two “types” of Progressive education which are often viewed as separate: child-centered and social reform. Child-centered education focused on placing the child and their needs at the center of pedagogical discourse, child-centered education was often viewed as the domain of women who were “dismissed as mere emotional ornamentation to the real work of theorizing the role of schools in social reform.” The social reform branch of Progressive education focused on a “scientific” understanding of economic, racial, and social issues and how the schools could aid in resolving these issues. Stanley’s pedagogy embodies both, as she used the language of child-centered education but used the social reform focus on racial determinism as the key frame. Diana Moyer, “The Gendered Boundaries of Child-centred Education: Elsie Ripley Clapp and the History of US Progressive Education,” *Gender and Education* 21, no. 5 (September 1, 2009): 535, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540250802415140>.

strategy for dealing with the “Mexican element.” Her work on Mexican education would culminate in the experimental Cucamonga School and would only be abandoned in the aftermath of the Great Depression.

Stanley begins her treatise on Mexican education by solidifying a crucial tenet of Benevolent Americanization: that to deal properly with the Mexican problem, popular understandings of the Mexican as an inherent menace must be abandoned. In her opening paragraph, she claims that currently the creation of segregated schools had been pushed forward by the “selfish viewpoint of the English-speaking public.”⁴⁸ By framing the desires of the white masses as “selfish” she attempts to position herself, a female educator, as a level-headed and selfless fair authority. In fact, she makes an effort to challenge Mexican stereotypes by casting a shadow of doubt on the “theory that the Mexican is a menace to the health and morals of the rest of the community.”⁴⁹ While she does not completely disprove the theory, she indicates that this theory need not be an unchangeable truth. In the debate about nature vs. nurture she, like most Progressive education reforms, decisively sides with nurture. At the conclusion of her first paragraph, she argues that the placement of Mexicans “in poor buildings, given the poorest teachers of the force” was going to turn the fear of the Mexican menace into reality.⁵⁰ She asserts that placing Mexican students into run-down schools was a risk not only to the Mexican people themselves but perhaps more importantly, to the structure of community life.

⁴⁸ Stanley, Grace C., “Special Schools for Mexicans.”

⁴⁹ Stanley, Grace C.

⁵⁰ Stanley, Grace C.

Segregation, as being practiced currently, is framed as a danger to the larger white community.

Naturally, the “community life,” which Stanley frames as in need of protection, is the status quo citrus country town. These communities celebrated independence, natural bounty, and white innovation but relied upon Mexican labor for the harvesting and processing of their crops. Within the citrus country town, it was impossible to fully segregate this shared labor space. Mexican laborers would live in segregated neighborhoods, but often these neighborhoods were just across the road, train tracks, or creek from their white employers. The anxiety produced by this proximity had boiled over once before with the expulsion of the Chinese and Japanese laborers. As I argue in chapter 2, the creation of separate Mexican subdivisions divided space within the citrus country town and thereby illustrated grower “control” over their Mexican workers. The economy and livelihood of both the white and Mexican residents or in Stanley’s words, “the whole body politic” of the citrus country town relied on an uneasy negotiation of race and space.⁵¹ Stanley and her son’s livelihoods were very much a part of the citrus country town dynamic as the profitability of their combined 17 acres of citrus groves relied on the stability of the foreign labor arrangement. When Stanley states that with the existing form of segregation “the community is certainly not protected but is laying up for itself a day of wrath,” she is speaking of the white “community” and to the danger to the county as a whole and to herself.⁵² For her, it is urgent that any expression of wrath

⁵¹ Stanley, Grace C.

⁵² Stanley, Grace C.

and unrest be prevented. The feminine touch of Benevolent Americanization therefore can be used to preserve the citrus country town way of life, to tame the Mexican menace through nurturing.

Stanley's solution denies the rationality behind current segregation practices but simultaneously rejects the benefits of integration. Integration, she argues, is ineffective because thus far it has failed to produce "the advance toward American standards of living which we believe to be essential to our institutions" within Mexican populations.⁵³ Here it is clear that the purpose of Mexican education is to ensure that "our institutions" are maintained despite the threat of "Mexican-ness." While the identity of "our institutions" is not elaborated on she is most likely referring to the institution of government and citizenship, a concern shared by her colleagues dealing with the foreign rurality crisis in education. Additionally, given her background and investment in the citrus industry, it is likely she is also referring to the economic institutions of the citrus country town. She reasons that only by achieving "American standards of living" can the threat of the Mexican people's foreignness be neutralized, and the institution and labor structure of the citrus country town be able to flourish.

The bulk of her argument against integration, however, relies on the assertion that Mexican students are not able to reach their potential at schools created for white students. Like other administrators of the time, she notes the issues of Mexican pupils being held back in the lower grades despite their age, as well as truancy. Stanley asserts

⁵³ Stanley, Grace C.

that “To one observing them they appear dull, stupid, phlegmatic.”⁵⁴ These issues, Stanley asserts, are not inherent but behavioral, the result of their environment, an environment developed for white pupils. These negative behavioral traits can be understood to be caused by “our present course of study with its emphasis on book study and on seatwork.”⁵⁵ Stanley then calls for a revolution in pedagogy, to create “special schools” for Mexicans which cater to their unique “needs.” Essentially, “special schools” segregated students who were seen as needing unique and specific pedagogy and curriculum.⁵⁶ She argues that separating Mexican students (segregation) and formulating a “special” curriculum to meet their particular “needs” (individual education applied to race) is the only way to alleviate student ills. Until these needs are met, the threat of an unproductive Mexican population and an unhappy white population threatened the balance of labor and community.

Her underlying assumption of the inherent difference between Mexican and white pupils springs from Stanley’s interest in the individual education movement. Individual education was a Progressive Era movement that focused on meeting the perceived needs of the student rather than conforming the student to the school. While there were multiple offshoots of the movement, Stanley was most interested in the Italian Montessori

⁵⁴ Stanley, Grace C.

⁵⁵ Stanley, Grace C.

⁵⁶The term “special schools” is frustratingly vague, the term was generally used to refer to education outside the “norm” of public school curricula, this varied widely from agricultural education to education for the “Mentally Deficient” and blind. “Special Schools and Services California School for the Blind Register of Students,” 1928 1901, F3752:2866, California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento California; John Branigan to Helen Heffernan, “Response to The Mentally Deficient, A School Program,” June 24, 1946, F3752:1863, California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento California.

education model formulated by Maria Montessori. As Stanley describes it, “Much greater results could be secured by study of children and their reactions and interests under the inspiration of teachers with initiative and freedom from too much restrictive requirements from the outside.”⁵⁷ By the early 1920s, American teachers had been introduced to the Montessori model and sought to implement it in California schools.⁵⁸ For the majority of Stanley’s educational career, she was a proponent of implementing individual education strategies as the key to unlocking the true potential of each child, particularly those considered to be of “low intelligence.”⁵⁹ Ideally, the system would “enable the child from the time he enters the school to have instructions suited to his individual needs and to advance as fast as possible.”⁶⁰ In theory, the system would allow each individual child to reach their full potential uninhibited by the needs of other children.

The San Bernardino County Sun covered Stanley’s visit to an individual education school in Los Angeles and stated that Stanley believed the system to be “marvelous” as it “has put the result up to the child and the teacher has become more or less a supervisor that guides the child...the advancement of the individual depends on the

⁵⁷ Hill, Merton E., *A Century of Public Education in San Bernardino County California 1850-1958*, vol. 2, n.d., 140.

⁵⁸ Educator Adelia Samuels stated that, “Miss Katherine More, a graduate of the Montessori School in Rome and a teacher in the Los Angeles City Schools” was key in expanding Montessori education within California. Adelia Adams Samuels, *An About-Face in Education: A Primer Interpretation of Some Educational Principles with a Manual of Writing, Reading, Spelling and Arithmetic* (H. Wagner Publishing Company, 1924), sec. Preface.

⁵⁹ A direct quotation from Stanley on her philosophy: “My philosophy of education was influenced by the work of Madam Montessori, the Italian educator who was doing remarkable work with children of low intelligence.” Hill, Merton E., *A Century of Public Education in San Bernardino County California 1850-1958*, 2:410.

⁶⁰ “Individual Instruction in Public Schools Proves to Be Remarkable Success,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, January 28, 1922.

child himself.”⁶¹ Within Stanley’s model, it is not the teacher’s job to teach the student, the burden of education is on the student. The teacher acts not as a patriarchal dictator but supervises with the gentle hand of a mother, lightly steering the child in the proper direction. Those students who advance are seen as possessors of natural genius and initiative while those who struggle do so due to their own inadequacies. Within the context of Mexican education, those students who may not have English language skills at home are at a disadvantage as it is no longer the teacher’s responsibility to ensure the students learn. Individual education creates a natural way in which Mexican students can be left behind and the responsibility for any lack of progress is placed squarely on the students’ shoulders.

While individual education has egalitarian potential, Grace Stanley’s implementation of individual education would only entrench perceived racial differences.⁶² Stanley spends quite a bit of time discussing the particular characteristics of Mexican children and in so doing she establishes the “individual talents” of the pupils as separate from white students. She does so to establish racial differences, but also to focus

⁶¹ “Individual Instruction in Public Schools Proves to Be Remarkable Success.”

⁶² Within the literature on Mexican segregation, individual education pedagogy has not received significant attention. Only Vicki Ruíz, in her analysis of the El Paso Rose Gregory Houchen Settlement House, comments on individual education, stating that “The most striking theme that repeatedly emerges from Houchen documents is that of individualism. Missionaries emphasized the importance of individual decision-making and individual accomplishment.” Ruíz’s analysis focuses on religious conversion, but when viewed through the lens of Americanization new patterns emerge. Schools practicing individual education, while pedaling “freedom” and equal opportunity, instead serve as educational experiments which “prove” the existence of racial difference and provide justifications for stereotypes. Stereotypes included Mexican children’s “natural” abilities in song, dance, craftsmanship and physical activities. Vicki Ruíz, *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in Twentieth-Century America*, 10th anniversary ed (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 47, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucr/detail.action?docID=472363>.

on the positive characteristics of Mexican children. Of the positive characteristics, Stanley declares that Mexican students' penmanship, drawing, rhythm, singing abilities, and handiwork are superior to white students. Most notably their skills are represented as stemming from the body, from physical control over one's hand when writing and over one's feet in dancing. Other scholars like García have noted that educators found value in Mexican students when their talents aligned with entertainment.⁶³ While this was part of the picture, there was another motivation in focusing on these physical characteristics. At first, skills like rhythm, penmanship, and handiwork do not seem to align with the needs of "our institutions," as Stanley put it. However, her emphasis on physical control is tied to the established labor regime, the deftness of the hands to swiftly grab, clip, and stow an orange, the rhythm of the packing line all relies on these sorts of physical skills. As Stanley states. "They are primarily interested in action and emotion but grow listless under purely mental effort."⁶⁴

In Stanley's estimation, Mexican children are suited for different types of education and occupations and their education must align with these "individual" needs she has identified. In Stanley's philosophy, we see the contradictions of individual education in racialized contexts, Mexican students are "individual" in that they differ from white students. Mexican students are free to "individually" learn within the bounds

⁶³ The theory that Mexican students were more skilled at the arts and manual work later became commonplace ten years later in the 1930s. See California Department of Education, *A Guide for Teachers of Beginning Non-English Speaking Children* Bulletin no. 8 (1932), 29. And Annie S. Reynolds, *The Education of Spanish-Speaking Children in Five Southwestern States* U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, 1933, 29.

⁶⁴ Stanley, Grace C., "Special Schools for Mexicans."

of pre-ascribed racialized expectations. By fusing together the ideas of individual pupil-driven education with racial stereotypes, Stanley justified the education of Mexican students and the acceptance of their presence in San Bernardino communities.

Conceptualizing the “Ideal” Segregated School

Stanley found in the Cucamonga School a place to implement her philosophy of Benevolent Americanization and experiment with Mexican education. There she sought to “work out such a course of a careful study of the culture and crafts of the Mexican people...in order that it may be a development of their race contribution to our civilization.”⁶⁵ The Cucamonga School was a demonstration school under her supervision and control from 1920 to around 1925.⁶⁶ The Cucamonga Demonstration School began under the authority of the San Bernardino county superintendents and, later when Stanley took a position in Sacramento, it became the California State Demonstration School for Mexican education. Teachers would visit the model school to learn about “proper” techniques in Mexican education.

Despite the importance of the Cucamonga school, it has not been studied in the secondary literature.⁶⁷ The school’s goal was to implement the ideals of Benevolent Americanization as directly as possible, and it continued to do so into the 1940s. The

⁶⁵ Stanley, Grace C.

⁶⁶ A “demonstration school” is an experimental school employing new pedagogical strategies. Their role is to teach and “demonstrate” new pedagogical techniques to administrators, educators and researchers who wish to visit.

⁶⁷ González mentions the existence of the Cucamonga School in his introduction as evidence of the creation of “laboratories for research” but does not analyze the practices of the school itself or how it was formed. González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 19.

practices that were formulated there demonstrate important links between county and state Americanization policy. Stanley first introduced the Cucamonga Demonstration School in “Special Schools for Mexicans.” In her *Survey* article, she paints the school as an ideal physical and pedagogical space for implementing “proper segregation.” Although the school is not named in this piece, it is clear from her future work at the school and from her description that she is in fact discussing the Cucamonga School. Her work at the Cucamonga Demonstration School wove together Benevolent Americanization and rural school reforms in order to create, in her estimation, the ideal Mexican school.

The stated benefits of the Cucamonga School stem first from the physical environment of the school itself. Interest in school architecture, cleanliness, and ventilation derived from the Progressivist beliefs that one’s environment was a defining contributor to educational outcomes.⁶⁸ These issues were advocated by rural school reformers in California as early as the mid-1910s. One of the most prominent of these proponents at the state level was the Commissioner of Elementary School Margaret McNaught. In her Second Biennial Report, she draws connections between contagion and the old schoolhouse arguing that “when an insanitary, old schoolhouse, long past its usefulness, carelessly set in the center of a small, bare school yard, is replaced by a comfortable, modern, well-equipped building, surrounded by acres of grounds shaded in fine trees and having ample space for playgrounds and garden plots,” then schools can

⁶⁸ For details on Progressive Era school architecture see: Baughn, “A Modern School Plant.”

reach their true potential.⁶⁹ Realizing a pastoralist ideal of the country school, McNaught argues, was a primary way to elevate country life and also increase daily attendance and therefore school revenue. McNaught depicts the old schoolhouse as an environmental hazard to the health of the children and the community. Stanley later adopts the idea of the schoolhouse as hazard but re-works it to portray the old schoolhouse as a threat to the country life system.

In “Special Schools for Mexicans” Stanley foresees the poor schools and educational environments as a source of contestation within the Mexican community. Mexican contestation would then pose a threat to the existing labor regime. In her opening paragraph, she states that “If the Mexicans are placed in poor buildings, given the poorest teachers of the force...then the community is certainly not protected but is laying up for itself a day of wrath.”⁷⁰ The old schoolhouse is viewed as a threat and danger to the established community. Stanley, using the language of benevolence, assumes her role as a protector of the white community. Part of her protective recommendations is, therefore, the creation of new modern segregated schoolhouses like Cucamonga. In describing the Cucamonga School, Stanley describes the school as “modern in every respect, well lighted and ventilated.”⁷¹ Benevolent Americanization idealized a new improved environment that combined the architecture of modern Progressive reform with improved teachers and ultimately, by extension, improved

⁶⁹ California State Department of Education Division of Elementary Education, “Second Biennial Report of the State Board of Education State of California 1914-1916,” 133.

⁷⁰ Stanley, Grace C., “Special Schools for Mexicans.”

⁷¹ Stanley, Grace C.

students. According to Stanley, a physical transformation elicited an emotional transformation within the students. Rather than wrath, “Their faces radiated joy, they had thrown off the repression that held them down.”⁷² By establishing the proper environment for segregation, Stanley argued, the Mexican and white population’s desires could be satisfied. By following the Cucamonga School’s example, the environmentalism of the modern schoolhouse could save the modern country town.

Stanley goes so far as to say that these ideal segregated schools, which she claims to have witnessed, are places of “freedom.” By doing so she recasts segregation as a privilege and as a kindness provoked by her womanly, Progressive instincts. Stanley’s pedagogy relied heavily on the idea of “freedom” and the language of “democracy” borrowing in part from John Dewey, known as the father of Progressive education, and other Progressive educators’ insistence that Progressivism could solve rifts in democracy by fostering a balance between individuality and the cohesion of the nation. According to Progressive education historian Cremin, “Far from being hostile to the principle of individuality he [Dewey] contended, some systematic organization of activities and subject matter is the only means for achieving individuality; and teachers, by virtue of their richer and fuller experience, have not only the right but the high obligation to assist students in the enterprise.”⁷³ Educational “freedom” was something inherently limited

⁷² Stanley, Grace C.

⁷³ Lawrence Arthur Cremin, *The Transformation of the School; Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), 235, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/003906294>; Almost the exact same language is employed in the Cucamonga School Stanley starts later in her career “We know that the child is the best indicator of his own interests. We know that interest is the basis of all learning. But we are afraid to trust the little learner. We fear that he will be interested in something harmful...It is here that the mature judgement of the teacher must function. She, with the wisdom of her

and tied to the duties of the citizen to support the state. Students were free to contribute to the classroom, as a metaphor for society, in their own way, as long as it was approved by the “mature” teacher. In the context of the racialized classroom and racialized society, students had the “freedom” to choose their role within society as long as the white female teacher, representative of white authority, deemed that role as productive and fitting.⁷⁴ Determinations of productivity and fitness were inextricably linked to the demands of racial capitalism.

Stanley’s articulation of benevolence was significant because it allowed the San Bernardino County Schools to adapt to the needs of local employers and engage in a quiet segregation policy, easily overlooked by the white community. Further, in many instances, such schools are not designated officially as “Mexican schools” making them difficult to identify in administrative archives. Because these schools reside in the shadows of the archives they have often been overlooked by scholars. However, for many decades the county clung to the following notion, “To make the separate school the benefit it should be, it must be a special school as well.”⁷⁵ Stanley’s ideology of improvement and “special schools” maintained a system of segregation that disguised the ugliness of racial bigotry and racial science under the guise of benevolent fairness.

greater experience, must decide whether or not his plan is good or bad." Samuels, *An About-Face in Education*, 34.

⁷⁴ Grace Stanley and her protégé Adelia Samuels often used the term “social responsibility” to describe the relationship to democracy and education, “The schools must aid in developing an effective citizenry through an awakened need for self-discipline based upon the child’s comprehension of his social responsibility.” Social responsibility could be encoded with racial discourse. Samuels, *An About-Face in Education*, 11.

⁷⁵ Grace C Stanley.

Bringing Benevolent Americanization to the State

On September 23, 1922, Stanley resigned as the Superintendent of County Schools. In her stead, Stanley nominated Ida May Collins who was her deputy superintendent. Collins ran unopposed.⁷⁶ It is clear from the transition of power that the position of the superintendent was consolidated around a group of Redlands individuals. The changing of the guard did not represent a shift in ideology. From McPherron to Stanley to Collins, there was an uninterrupted line of mentor to mentee. Each superintendent built upon the work of their predecessor. Upon her resignation, Stanley began her tenure in the education department at Chaffey Junior College with her colleague Merton E. Hill and she subsequently took up a post as the president of the Southern Section of the California Teachers' Association.⁷⁷ On February 1, 1923, Stanley replaced Margaret McNaught as the State Commissioner of Elementary Education under the direction of William Wood.⁷⁸ Her position in the State Department of Education allowed her to spread the theory of Benevolent Americanization and codify the tenets of Mexican education.

In Stanley's Biennial Report presented in June 1924, Stanley focuses on three pillars of accomplishments, the creation of a civics curriculum, the establishment of the Cucamonga demonstration school, and the advancements of rural school reform. In her state report, the ideals of individual education, Benevolent Americanization, and the

⁷⁶ "Teachers Get Certificates," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, September 14, 1922.

⁷⁷ "Elementary Education Head Named," *Oakland Tribune*, November 24, 1922.

⁷⁸ "Mrs. Grace Stanley Succeeds McNaught," *The Fresno Morning Republican*, November 26, 1922, Newspapers.com.

problem of foreign rurality coalesce. The connections between rurality, Mexican education, and her solutions for these problems -- environmentalism and individual education packaged as Benevolent Americanization -- are outlined. These policies no longer represent the isolated policies of a single county but the policies of the state.

During her tenure at the state level, Stanley continued to push for individual education methods. Her *California State Board of Education Outline for the Study of Civics, Seventh and Eighth Grade* unites her focus on instilling American values with her individual education pedagogy. Her 1924 curriculum recommendation asserted that the primary purpose of civics was to “help the pupil to find his own powers and capacities so that he may know what is his sphere of greatest usefulness to society.”⁷⁹ As in her previous article, “Special Schools for Mexicans,” Stanley places the onus of learning and discovery on the individual student. Further, in her civics curriculum, it is clear that the role of the student in the individual education system is not just to learn the information and advance but to identify the students’ place within American society. The primary goal of education, in her estimation, was to discover and act upon one’s inherent usefulness to society, or to use Stanley’s words, to “American institutions.”⁸⁰ It is at school, under the gentle guidance of the teacher, where the student’s “relation to society” is established and evaluated. Stanley’s civics curriculum was meant to be distributed statewide to higher grade levels, which in the 1920s included few Mexican students.

⁷⁹ Grace C. Stanley, “California State Board of Education Outline for Study of Civics Seventh and Eighth Grades” (Sacramento, California, 1924), 7, cLT 103 C152ou, California State Library, California Room.

⁸⁰ Stanley, Grace C., “Special Schools for Mexicans.”

However, her particular version of meritocracy, when applied to Mexican schools, only served to naturalize and re-inscribe perceived “inherent” characteristics.

Around the time of Stanley’s state position, the state was gradually shifting its focus beyond adult Americanization. Previously, the state became involved in adult Americanization through the Commission of Immigration and Housing (CCIH), established in 1913. However, the commission was separate from the Education Department. Later, with the help of Ethel Richardson, the commission partnered with the State Education Department. In 1920, the Department of Adult Education, focusing primarily on adult immigrant education, was formed officially bringing the work of the CCIH into the Education Department. In the 1920s Americanization policies would expand beyond adult education and into programs for child education. Richardson became the Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction and in 1922 published *The Immigrant Child in the Public Schools* in which she laid out a state-endorsed guide to teaching immigrant children in California. In *The Immigrant Child in the Public Schools* Richardson notes that previously the state had focused primarily on the issue of foreign adult education and that “little thought has been given, that is the education of the non-English speaking child.”⁸¹ In attempting to shift focus from the adult to the child, her work dwells exclusively on tactics that can be used to teach children the English language. She provides lesson plans, conversation outlines, and vocabulary words she

⁸¹ Ethel Richardson, *The Immigrant Child in the Public Schools* / (Sacramento :, 1922), 3, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc2.ark:/13960/t80k27z5g>. Stanley’s work on the education of Mexican children then was certainly ahead of its time and was perhaps another reason that she was sought for a state position in 1922.

deems suitable for the classroom. Her pedagogy rests upon small group discussions that aid the entire class in understanding English. There is no focus on individual education philosophy and importantly, she argues that “it is exceedingly important that the basis of segregation be language and not nationality.”⁸² In fact, Richardson’s lessons do not identify any specific immigrant groups and on the whole, remain relatively neutral. She also instructs teachers to be sensitive and aware of the immigrant child’s culture and to use their cultural background in the classroom to aid in their assimilation. However, with the emergence of Stanley on the state stage, Richardson’s ideas - and by extension the state’s ideas - about immigrant education shift drastically.

In Richardson’s Biennial Report given in 1924, the shift between previous Americanization techniques and Stanley’s Benevolent Americanization is evident. Richardson opens her report with a summary of the progress in adult education and then introduces the new work being conducted in the area of immigrant child education. Richardson describes how her work in adult education was so consuming that she needed another counterpart to help lead immigrant child education under the Commission of Immigration and Housing. This leader was Grace Stanley. Under her direction, ten schools, with the Cucamonga School as the primary demonstration school, were identified as sites for experiments for immigrant child pedagogy. Within these ten sites, which are unfortunately not named, “The superintendents and principals agreed to abandon the usual course of study and to give Mrs. Stanley complete freedom in directing

⁸² Richardson, 6.

the work of the teacher.”⁸³ Now with complete control, Stanley’s policies were recommended throughout the state.⁸⁴ Stanley’s Benevolent Americanization and individual education theories were no longer confined to an article, or a single school, but were now official state policy.

Stanley’s complete control over the curriculum meant that established ideals about segregation were overturned. First, the focus on immigrant education shifted from a general overview to a focus and “experiment” on as Richardson says, “one group of foreign children.”⁸⁵ While Richardson does not name the group, from Stanley’s previous work it is clear that the “group” in question consisted of Mexican children. Under her control, Mexican children become the primary group of immigrants being surveilled and experimented on by the state.⁸⁶ Richardson now parrots Stanley’s ideas about individual education stating that “the foreign-born will begin to find expression for his own gifts and endowments.”⁸⁷ Her focus on the individual rather than the group, as her previous work

⁸³ Ethel Richardson, “Report of the Assistant State Superintendent of Public Instruction In Charge of Adult Education,” Appendix to Journals of Senate and Assembly, California Forty-Sixth Session, 1925, June 30, 1924, 61, California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento California, <https://archive.org/details/appendixtojourn19254cali/page/n619>.

⁸⁴ Unfortunately, the author has been unable to find any reports about her specific recommendations in the archives. For unknown reasons the records of the State Commissioner of Elementary Schools during her tenure are not in the California State Archival collection. Only the official biennial reports survive.

⁸⁵ Ethel Richardson, “Report of the Assistant State Superintendent of Public Instruction In Charge of Adult Education,” 61.

⁸⁶ The focus on Mexican immigration coincides with the passing of the 1924 Immigration Act which fully restricted Asian immigrants and heavily limited immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe. Mexican immigrants were specifically excluded from the immigration quotas as Congress did not limit immigration within the Western Hemisphere.

⁸⁷ Ethel Richardson, “Report of the Assistant State Superintendent of Public Instruction In Charge of Adult Education,” 66.

had done, represents another shift in her ideology. As experiments in Mexican education were underway Stanley was elected as the Commissioner of Elementary Schools.

Both Richardson and Stanley focus their efforts not just on immigrant education but on the rural problem as well. In both of their works, they use “rural” and “immigrant” schools interchangeably as LA Normal administrators did in previous years. In Richardson’s report, she discusses rural education as a target for Americanization pedagogy. Here she synthesizes environmentalism, Americanization, and the problem of foreign rurality, “Cleaning up the school grounds, studying better methods of school sanitation, providing hot lunch, helping the parents to become naturalized American citizens - all are included in the technique of elementary teaching for a rural school.”⁸⁸ It is assumed that the rural school will be in desperate need of Americanization that the classroom was comprised of immigrants.

The Cucamonga School – Benevolent Americanization in Action

The Cucamonga School for Mexican children was the primary space in which the state experimented with the ideals of Benevolent Americanization. When Stanley pursued her position with the state, she left her protégé, Adelia A. Samuels, as the Director of the demonstration school. Samuels followed Stanley’s policy of Benevolent Americanization and was a fierce advocate of individual education and of the Montessori style of education. The school was designated an official demonstration school of the California Department of Elementary education in 1922. In 1924, Samuels and Stanley published a

⁸⁸ Ethel Richardson, 61.

book detailing the philosophy of the school titled *An About-Face in Education*.⁸⁹ There Samuels details both the idealistic philosophy of individual education, provides lesson plan ideas, showcases student work, and features teachers' descriptions "average" teaching days.⁹⁰ The central concern in Samuels and Stanley's work is to lay out the primary tenets and philosophies of individual education. In so doing, Stanley hoped that the school would push towards the goal of developing "human welfare" and most ambitiously, "to bring about peace in the world."⁹¹ These lofty pedagogical goals are reiterated throughout the text with an emphasis on citizenship, individual responsibility, brotherhood, and "freedom."

Of primary concern in *An About-Face in Education* is the issue of citizenship and establishing a sense of individual responsibility. Samuels spends much of the book detailing ways in which teachers may use curiosity and self-exploration to form pupils into productive members of society. She states that an ideal child "should similarly

⁸⁹ Samuels wrote the majority of the book with Stanley contributing the introduction. The book was originally called *The State Demonstration School, Cucamonga and Education in Cucamonga State Demonstration School* according to the *Western Journal of Education* see Harr Wagner, California. Dept. of Public Instruction, and California. Dept. of Education, "New Releases Harr Wagner Publishing Company," *The Western Journal of Education* Vol XXX (April 1924): 14.

⁹⁰ *An About-Face in Education* is an incredibly important particularly because it presents lesson plans, teacher descriptions of a typical day and even student's work. One of the difficulties of studying elementary school education is that there are not many sources which allow us to see inside the classroom. Even within oral histories it is difficult for adults who experienced Americanization to remember classroom pedagogy or assignments. As a result, we are often left with administrative directives. As González notes about these directives, "These assertions, we presume, had some relation to classroom practice." *An About-Face in Education* allows us to go beyond presumption. González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 36.

⁹¹ Samuels, *An About-Face in Education*. "We are all greatly concerned to bring about peace in the world, but we shall not have arrived at such a state until we have released the energy of our individual citizens so that it may be directed into productive service. Probably the frustration of the legitimate expression of a great talent is one of the most fruitful sources of discord and inharmony among the members of the human race. It is my hope that this volume may make its contribution to the development of human welfare."

experience a desire to adapt himself and his purposes to meet the conditions imposed by a society based upon right. It is only when these inner motives are actively at work that the individual citizen finds his place in civic growth.”⁹² The teacher’s job is to present the child with the tools to learn, but it is up to the student to decide what to learn and to what extent he may contribute to American society. The female teacher acts as the maternal director of the children’s freedom. She provides what she deems to be “appropriate” tools, resources, and nurture to loosely guide students to seek their potential. Samuels argues that to create a happy and productive society, children must learn early on to focus only on subjects in which they have the most skill and interest.

Samuels sees individual freedom within the classroom as a natural extension of democracy into the schoolhouse. Within the system, the child “must arrange his own course of study according to his own needs, select his own materials, determine the tools he requires – he must, in other words, think for himself.”⁹³ In Samuels’s idealistic assessment, individual education provides the only way to make the classroom environment egalitarian and to support the needs of the individual. However, as an extension of individual education philosophy, what a student does and does not do can only be an indication of the child’s natural abilities and motivations rather than a reflection of societal constraints or pedagogical tactics.⁹⁴ It is then up to the student to

⁹² Samuels, 30.

⁹³ Samuels, 44.

⁹⁴ An individual’s capacity to succeed was also a concern in vocational education as well. As González notes, “The match between abilities and level of difficulty of the training involved became one of the critical concerns of guidance programs.” According to González in much of the Southwest vocational schools became synonymous with Mexican schools. González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 80.

prove that they can, in fact, think for themselves and thus prove their worthiness for citizenship and their proper, most productive place within American society.

In the first section of *An About-Face in Education*, the issue of race in the Cucamonga School is almost completely ignored. Samuels does not mention the particulars of the racial makeup of her students. The lack of racial discussion may be due in part to the general issue of mundane racism and also Samuels and Stanley's beliefs that individual education was the key to smoothing over racial relations.⁹⁵ Rather than seek to deny or reverse the increase in foreign children in California's schools Samuels, like Stanley, sought instead to devise a way of dealing with these students. In order to cater to these inherently and foreign "sets of ideas" and interests, individual education must be implemented. Samuels goes perhaps farther than Stanley in asserting the benevolence of individual education, arguing that "The constant contact with new associations, the interchange of ideas, the development of a common standard of good, should do much to destroy antipathy to change and dull the edge of prejudice."⁹⁶ Individual education is proposed as the solution to dulling the dangerous practice of prejudice and safeguarding community relations. Individual education seeks to reach two audiences, first the Mexican child who learns proper American comportment, and secondly the white resident wary of the presence of Mexican workers. Within the established racial economy extreme prejudice posed a risk, education for "the development of the individual for the

⁹⁵ García defines "mundane racism" as "the systematic subordination of Mexicans enacted as a commonplace, ordinary way of conducting business within and beyond schools." García, *Strategies of Segregation*, 5.

⁹⁶ Samuels, *An About-Face in Education*, 63.

advancement of the common good”⁹⁷ would be an effective way to maintain the status quo.

While Samuels only alludes to the racial makeup of her students, it is almost without doubt that the vast majority, if not all of the pupils, at the demonstration school were Mexican and Mexican American. When detailing the stories of individual students Samuels notes that the majority of her students “were illiterate when they entered school. They are, of course, all foreign birth.”⁹⁸ While she does not indicate the students and their parents' country of origin it is clear from the names of students and from various newspaper reports that the students were Mexican.⁹⁹ A 1927 newspaper article describing the school states that “Most of the 275 students are Mexicans.” The article even notes that representatives of the Mexican government visited the school to assess its progress.¹⁰⁰

As Samuels begins to provide concrete plans and goals for teachers interested in Benevolent Americanization, the wide scope of the individual choice and “freedom” she promotes in her general assessment falls away. Rather than offer students the freedom of a wide range of learning opportunities as she claims to do, in the actual lesson plans there is an extensive and primary focus on handwork, workmanship, and manual labor. Samuels argues that educators have dismissed the value of vocational work and she

⁹⁷ Samuels, 63.

⁹⁸ Samuels, 208.

⁹⁹ It is not clear if the names of students were changed. Samuels only uses the first names. Names like Manuel, Concha, Eligio, Jesus, Pedro, Rocalia, Ramona, and Juanita among others indicate that the classes were majority Mexican or Mexican American. Samuels, *An About-Face in Education*.

¹⁰⁰ In the 1920s the Cucamonga district was considering expanding the educational program to the high school level. Maud Miller, “System of Instruction as Used in South Cucamonga School Gains Recognition,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, June 14, 1927, Newspapers.com.

insists on the value of physical rather than mental labor.¹⁰¹ In her assessment, “These are essential qualities in the effective citizen, and as such, every task undertaken by the child should give opportunity for their growth. There is ample scope for this handwork, yet all too often its full possibilities are never realized.”¹⁰² At the Cucamonga Demonstration School, Samuels sought to fully recognize these possibilities, as a result, classroom exercises and activities become focused on the literal production of goods rather than academics. Samuels proudly provides images of luncheon sets, laundry bags, desks, desk pads, and seat cushions made by the students.¹⁰³ In teacher Margaret White Bachhuber’s description of her day with her primary children, she enthusiastically reports on the successes of individual instruction, “Rocalia was making holders for the cooking room. She finished two that day. Mary was hemming dish towels, and Trinor (a boy) was sewing on a curtain.”¹⁰⁴ Thelma A. St. John also speaks highly of the educational experience of young boys building a table and girls creating tablecloths. Students are described as making dishcloths, aprons, potholders, guest towels, window curtains, handkerchiefs, and even a couch cover.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Educators in Indian Boarding schools also emphasized labor and vocational education as the primary means of reform. For more see Whalen, *Native Students at Work*.

¹⁰² Samuels, *An About-Face in Education*, 64. See also “Can he avoid an increasing understanding of the dignity of labor regardless of whether the laborer is adorned with the white collar of the gentleman’s job? Can his growing desire to do better and better work for himself fail to lead to greater value as a citizen? Can pride in workmanship, manual or academic, fail to advance him toward the goal of usefulness to society?” 68-69

¹⁰³ Samuels, 72.

¹⁰⁴ Samuels, 230.

¹⁰⁵ From Kathryn M. Fraser’s description of “A Day with the Advanced Group” “Four of the children were making cooking aprons, caps and hot-dish holders, so that they might have the privilege of helping with our hot luncheon. The boys like to cook as well as the girls do, so they, too, have to make their aprons. Most of these articles are made from flour sacks. From this same material the children have made, in addition to the things mentioned, guest towels, laundry bags, dresses, pillow covers, table runners, luncheon sets, window curtains. From the salt and corn meal sacks they have made handkerchiefs, collar, cuff and vest sets, and

Punctuating manual work is recess, singing, lessons on geography, and basic writing. Based upon these descriptions of a “typical day” it is clear that individual education at the Cucamonga School only serves to reinforce the established belief that Mexicans were only fit for manual work. The unstated assumption is that these children naturally prefer the work of sewing and woodworking to other forms of knowledge. In 1927, *The San Bernardino County Sun* reports that at the school, “No special emphasis is placed on handicraft of manual training, Mrs. Samuels says, although all of the children are given the opportunity to work with dies, construct furniture, and do sewing. Most of the 275 students are Mexicans, she explains, and their principal interest lies in practical work.”¹⁰⁶ Under the guise of freedom of choice, stereotypes are reinforced and justified as an egalitarian practice, as Benevolent Americanization.¹⁰⁷ The Cucamonga School was not simply an experiment with individual education practices, it was an experiment meant to assess the “special interests and abilities” of Mexican children in order to justify their presence in California on the grounds that they could produce objects and labor deemed desirable by white elites.¹⁰⁸

from cement sacks they have made a couch cover. Five of the children were studying geography " Samuels, 254.

¹⁰⁶ Miller, “System of Instruction as Used in South Cucamonga School Gains Recognition.”

¹⁰⁷ In addition to upholding racial expectations, educational expectations also followed strict gender norms. Torres-Rouff in his discussion of vocational education attests that “In their execution, these programs prepared students at the Mexican schools for low-skill work, and did so within a profoundly gendered context.” Torres-Rouff, “Becoming Mexican,” 116.

¹⁰⁸ González observed that between 1930-1937 there was a UCLA experimental school called the La Jolla Mexican School. He indicates that, “Within the year teachers throughout southern California became familiar with the La Jolla experiment and many considered it a model school.” González’s work suggests a departure from the Cucamonga School but that the model of Mexican experimental schools continued. González, *Labor and Community*, 1994, 102–3.

The Network of Americanization Professionals

Stanley did not work in isolation; she created a network of Americanization professionals who invested in Benevolent Americanization. She collaborated with state officials like Ethel Richardson and Elizabeth Keppie, the LA Normal teacher who revamped rural education. Keppie and Stanley met to discuss the Cucamonga School.¹⁰⁹ As superintendent, Stanley was also active in the county free library movement and claimed that during her tenure she helped almost all of the county districts receive libraries.¹¹⁰ Beyond her state connections, Stanley taught, mentored, and influenced other local administrators, including Ida Collins and Merton E Hill. They, in turn, served as a mouthpiece for Benevolent Americanization. Together they would build upon Stanley's ideas and foster other like-minded teachers and administrators, including graduate students who were the future of the profession.

Ida Collins, after serving as Stanley's Deputy Superintendent, took Stanley's place as the San Bernardino County superintendent in 1922. During her tenure, she maintained Americanization and rural reforms. Collins maintained the presence of segregated schools by adopting a policy of neighborhood schools. As San Bernardino education researcher Smith recounts, "Miss Collins favored the continuation of little

¹⁰⁹ "Survey of the condition in this county and the need for an Americanization school will be continued by Miss Elizabeth Keppie and Mrs. Grace Stanley during the next two weeks." Keppie and Stanley toured Ontario looking for a school site. "Hope to Have School for Americanization Open in Fall for Country Children."

¹¹⁰ Grace Stanley is quoted by Merton Hill, "When I took office there were two schools that were using the system by which they had the facilities of the County Library available, instead of being limited to the resources of the library fund set up from the law from their district. In cooperation with the County Librarian almost 100% of the schools were working under the system by 1922." Hill, Merton E., *A Century of Public Education in San Bernardino County California 1850-1958*, 2:409.

districts as a means of keeping the school close to the people.”¹¹¹ The sanctioning of community schools is simply another way to continue school segregation through housing segregation. Collins was deeply concerned with rural reform and under her leadership in 1925, San Bernardino County was one of the first to work with rural school supervisors as appointed for in Amendment 16. Rural school supervision brought administrators and teachers into rural schools to supervise the course of rural reforms. Under her leadership “The schools sending largely Mexican children because of colonies of Mexican families in the school districts, were supervised by a rural supervisor who was practically concerned and interested in these children and teachers and their problems.”¹¹² Collins utilized rural supervisors as a means to solve the issue of foreign rurality, to control and heavily monitor Mexican students.

Part of the project also included spreading the philosophy of Benevolent Americanization and bolstering it with other facts and intensive studies. As superintendent, Collins helped to foster a new generation of scholars and administrators who believed in the merits of segregation. Collins eagerly encouraged graduate students to perform studies in San Bernardino County. William Leis’s 1931 thesis “The Status of Mexican Education in Four Border States” illustrates this trend. Leis’s thesis, which earned him a master’s degree in Education at the University of Southern California, takes

¹¹¹ Gerald Arthur Smith, *History of the County School Administration of San Bernardino County, California*, 247. According to Gilbert González and David Torres-Rouff “neighborhood schools” was often another name used for Mexican schools. González, 16. And David Torres-Rouff, “Becoming Mexican: Segregated Schools and Social Scientists in Southern California, 1913—1946,” *South Calif Quart* 94, no. 1 (2012): 102.

¹¹² Hill, Merton E., *A Century of Public Education in San Bernardino County California 1850-1958*, 2:413–14.

as its focal point San Bernardino County. Although the study claims to focus on the four border regions of Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas, it was information from Collins which served as the primary source for Leis's study. His acknowledgment clearly indicates his main influences: "The author acknowledges with deepest appreciation the earnest cooperation and kindly assistance of Miss Ida M. Collins, County Superintendent of Schools, of San Bernardino, California and her capable staff of assistants, without whose help the material for this study could not have been gathered."¹¹³ No other superintendents or public-school officials are thanked. Although his study was primarily interested in assessing the status of education rather than measuring achievement, his study gives insights into how Collins and her administration were assessing and attempting to solve their "Mexican Problem." Leis's study is less his own work and more a report about what Collins was doing in the district at that time. The circulation of his scholarship and therefore the philosophy of Benevolent Americanization helped influence the next generation of educators.

Leis's study consisted of two parts, an in-depth assessment of local schools in order to create an "experimental curriculum" and a questionnaire about the status of Mexican American students which was sent out to superintendents across the four previously mentioned states. Of particular interest is the consortium of teachers assembled for the express purpose of experimenting with the Americanization curriculum. Leis describes the meeting, "In January of 1929 a committee of five

¹¹³ Leis, Ward William, "The Status of Education for Mexican Children in Four Border States" (University of Southern California, 1932), 4.

elementary school administrators of San Bernardino County, appointed by Miss Ida M. Collins, County Superintendent of Schools, set to work to formulate a plan for more adequately meeting the educational needs of the Mexican children of San Bernardino County.”¹¹⁴ He further states that Collins was calling for not only research in her county but also headed a special committee to study the same issues in Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside Counties.¹¹⁵ The committee observed other Mexican schools in the county and compiled the “best practices” and created three new “courses of study” for lower grades. Their recommendations were later adopted by the County Board of Education for implementation in “schools where the Mexican population formed a problem.”¹¹⁶ While it is unfortunate that records of these lessons have not survived, Leis’s outline of the process sheds light on the lengths the county was taking to solve the “Mexican Problem” in their schools.

Graduate studies proved helpful to administrators as Leis provides a mouthpiece for her and the committee’s ideas. As a graduate student, he had more freedom to argue against state policy than public school officials. He concludes his study by stating that the improved education of Mexican students “will require the abolishment of a non-segregation act such as that in the law of California.”¹¹⁷ Leis takes on a similar

¹¹⁴ Leis, Ward William, 12.

¹¹⁵ Unfortunately, the author was unable to locate any copies of these studies in the San Bernardino County Archives, the discovery of these documents could greatly increase the understanding of segregation policy and policy makers.

¹¹⁶ Leis, Ward William, “The Status of Education for Mexican Children in Four Border States,” 5.

¹¹⁷ Leis, Ward William, 73.

benevolent tone also arguing for “special schools,” mimicking the established rhetoric used by the San Bernardino County officials.

Merton E. Hill, like Collins, had a long professional relationship with Grace Stanley, in fact, the copy of his book *A Century of Public Education in San Bernardino County* at the San Bernardino County Archives contains Hill’s handwritten inscription to Stanley. Many newspaper reports describe Stanley’s public rallies in support of rural school supervision and other policies and include Hill as one of the attendees.¹¹⁸ Merton E. Hill was the principal of Chaffey Junior College and the supervising principal of the Ontario City Schools.¹¹⁹ In April 1921, he was elected as a Southern California representative for the board of the California Teachers’ Association.¹²⁰ Hill has been cited by other scholars as a key thinker in Americanization in Southern California. Hill’s 1928 thesis on Americanization, which was later reorganized as a book for wider distribution, is an important document for understanding the implementation of Americanization policy. The thesis consisted primarily of a survey of Americanization in San Bernardino County from 1927-1928. In the acknowledgments of both the book and thesis, he recognizes the “helpful co-operation of Miss Ida M. Collins.”¹²¹ It is clear then

¹¹⁸ “County School Cost Defended,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, May 29, 1921. “School Head in Amendment Plea,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, October 26, 1920; “School Tax Plan Before Club Women,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, October 28, 1920; “Mothers Guests at HI-Y Meeting,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, February 1, 1921.

¹¹⁹ “School Head in Amendment Plea,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, October 26, 1920. and “County School Official Home,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, April 12, 1921.

¹²⁰ “County School Official Home,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, April 12, 1921.

¹²¹ Merton E Hill, *Development of an Americanization Program* (Ontario, California: The Board of Trustees of the Chaffey Union High School and the Chaffey Junior College in co-operation with the County Board of Education of San Bernardino County, 1928).

that these studies were sanctioned by the County School office at the highest level, the superintendent.

Hill's study of Americanization focused both on child and adult education in the county. In particular, he focused on Ontario and the adult education program at Chaffey College. In his work, Hill expands upon Stanley's ideas of special schools:

Special classrooms adapted to the needs of the foreign element must be provided in the high school plant, in the elementary school buildings, in Mexican camps, and in the central buildings within certain camps; a traveling school room on a bus chassis has been provided; teachers must be trained for Americanization work; lessons must be prepared to meet the needs of both children and adults; budgetary provisions must secure sufficient amounts of money, and this money must be spent for the cause for which it has been apportioned; the public must be aroused to a realization of the great and immediate need of making provision for educational, vocational, and sanitation programs that will result in overcoming illiteracy, in eliminating unsanitary and unsightly labor camps and in promoting the use of the English language, the right American custom, and the best possible standards of American life.¹²²

These schools, in his opinion, need to be carefully conceived in order to permeate and ultimately sanitize all aspects of Mexican Americans' lives. Hill outlines an entire pervasive strategy for penetrating Mexican American communities at all angles. His thesis indicates a sophisticated multiprong approach that was already sufficiently in place in San Bernardino. The segregation approach in San Bernardino was ad-hoc and diverse but at the same time predicated on a unifying ideology of Americanization and separateness for the "benefit" of "the Mexican."

San Bernardino, in many ways, functioned as a laboratory of experimentation in school segregation. These "experiments" were easily perpetuated and allowed for

¹²² Merton E Hill, 10.

variation and flexibility across the schools in the county. Hill's approach to "special schools" indicates a level of creative adaptation going beyond public segregated high schools and elementary schools to portable "schools" that could penetrate the "unsanitary and unsightly" labor camps. One of these experiments, the "escuelita," consisted of an old school bus, repurposed as a schoolroom.¹²³ The bus was inexpensive and could be easily transported from one Mexican community to the next. Hill's various experiments indicate the reality of "special schools." In practice, segregated schools were not the ideal well-lighted and ventilated structures Stanley put forward. Instead, they were substandard facilities which were the "leftovers" of white schools. However, for Hill, the "escuelita" served the same purpose - to adapt the Mexican American population into an acceptable labor force.

Hill's thesis illuminates the role of the citrus industry in the formation of segregated schools. He states,

Such co-operation between school authorities and employers of labor is absolutely necessary in the development of a successful plan of Americanization. The California Fruit Growers' Exchange, the largest farmers' co-operative organization in the world, has interested itself in Americanization work...They have encouraged the placement of Americanization teachers in Mexican camps; they have prepared a text-book for aliens who are working in the citrus groves.¹²⁴

¹²³ In his study of Mexican labor in Texas, Zamora notes that local communities created "escuelitas" which served as Spanish language schools. While it is unclear if Hill was aware of community created *escuelitas*, co-opting the term to create schools meant to control rather than empower the Mexican community indicates Hill's impertinence. Emilio Zamora, *The World of the Mexican Worker in Texas*, Centennial Series of the Association of Former Students, Texas A&M University ;No. 44 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1993), 105, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/002650101>.

¹²⁴ Hill, Merton E., *Development of an Americanization Program*, 11.

Hill is not calling for the creation of the systems he outlines, they already exist. He is only proving these systems' effectiveness and advocating for other districts, counties, and employers to take up similar initiatives. The textbook he is referring to is *Easy Lessons in Everyday English for Citrus Fruit Workers*, which was published in 1920 to aid citrus laborers in learning English while also attempting to instill a modern "American" work ethic and a healthy respect for authority. Americanization was as much the work of industry leaders, in particular, citrus agribusiness leaders, as well as school administrators. Cleaning up the "Mexican Problem," Hill argues, will only come about through a collaboration of education policy and corporate participation.

Merton Hill is clearly following Benevolent Americanization when he states that, "There should be studied the peculiar aptitudes of these good-natured and kindly people that they may be developed along the best possible lines. Their capacities to perform different types of service should be set forth that their employers may utilize them to the best interests of both employer and employed."¹²⁵ His statement takes on a benevolent tone and focuses on the inherent "good-nature" of the Mexican people. By continually advocating for the possibility of development, Hill was catering to the needs of the growers, not the children themselves. Hill's economic bent is evidenced in his statement that the Mexican children can perform "different types of services," a clear euphemism for performing menial, strenuous, and brutal labor exploitation, which was seen as unfit for white workers. Economic concerns, mainly the apprehensions of citrus industrialists

¹²⁵ Hill, Merton E., 107.

were part and parcel of the Benevolent Americanization approach taken by San Bernardino County administrators.

Leis and Hill's theses were not unique. As Anthropologist Ruth Tuck found in her study of San Bernardino, many teachers used studies on Americanization to boost their careers. An anonymous retired teacher from San Bernardino told Tuck that, "I'd hate to count the number of master's theses that have been written in its defense, but, behind all the quotations and footnotes, you could be sure of one thing. The teachers who felt that way were concerned with their own status."¹²⁶ This generation of researchers used experiments and hid behind benevolent motivations and Progressive politics to maintain the racialized landscape of California. While the Great Depression and its aftermath would disrupt some of the tenets of Benevolent Americanization, much of the rhetoric continued up until the official desegregation of Mexican schools in California in 1947 through the *Mendez v. Westminster* case.

The Legacy of Benevolent Americanization

On April 20th, 1925, Grace Stanley resigned from her position as the State Commissioner of Elementary Education. In her announcement, she noted that she would continue to work with the Cucamonga School. Stanley later went on to start her own Montessori school in Redlands called the Casitas Ranch School.¹²⁷ Soon after, Will C. Wood would also leave his post as the Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1927.

¹²⁶ Tuck anonymized all of the persons who participated in her study. Ruth D. Tuck, *Not with the Fist, Mexican-Americans in a Southwest City* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and company, 1946), 188.

¹²⁷ "La Casitas School Will Open Monday," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, September 12, 1930, Newspapers.com.

Wood's exit would signal a shift in educational policy and an end to the Progressive education movement in California. While Stanley would continue to visit women's clubs and local organizations to speak on educational topics, by 1930, she admitted that the issue of foreign rurality remained unsolved. She maintained "that it is possible for the Mexican to adapt himself to American ways and to become a useful and desirable citizen'... although, she stated, 'we have not yet learned how to handle the problem effectively.'"¹²⁸ While Stanley still clung to her ideals, in the wake of the Great Depression, the "success" of her and the state's efforts were called into question.

Benevolent Americanization sought to pedagogically prove that Mexican pupils could be of use to society if their "natural talents" were cultivated, thereby justifying the presence of Mexican laborers as critical to maintaining the racialized labor structure of the citrus industry, on which Stanley and many other education officials depended. Using the familiar language of women's benevolence, Stanley's pedagogy aimed to soothe the "Mexican problem" using individual education theory to prove Mexican students' propensity and, perhaps most importantly, interest, in physical labor. The policy of Benevolent Americanization was a tangled web of moral reform, social policy, and spatial racialization, but at its heart was the racialized capitalism of citriculture.

As the Great Depression set in, the economic crisis overturned support for the Benevolent Americanization experiment. As García notes about other Progressive reformers, "their ethnocentric interpretations of the 'problem,' and sensitivity to

¹²⁸ "Redlands Woman Is Speaker at Hub City," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, April 9, 1930, Newspapers.com.

economic failure ultimately led them to similar political conclusions as restrictionists.”¹²⁹ In the panicked and fearmongering atmosphere of the financial depression, the economic organization of agribusiness was challenged. When Californians protested the hiring of Mexicans over white Americans, the nuances of Benevolent Americanization faltered. As a result, repatriation, and outright racial bigotry prevailed.¹³⁰

With the onset of the Great Depression, some of Benevolent Americanization’s key supporters rejected the ideology.¹³¹ Merton Hill and Ida Collins reversed their support for Benevolent Americanization and called for drastic limits on Mexican immigration, arguing that the possibilities of reform were at their end. In a 1929 article, Hill stated that due to the increase in immigration and his findings that 75% of the Mexican children do not progress beyond first grade, he “is opposed to further immigration of Mexicans and urges the necessity of concerted effort to make those already in the country better and more efficient”¹³² During the Repatriation Movement Mexican families, both citizen and non-citizen alike, were forcibly sent back to Mexico, and school enrollment fell. In 1932 in San Bernardino, enrollment at two elementary

¹²⁹ García notes economic motives reference to women’s clubs and Progressive organizations not among Americanization educational professionals. However there are many similarities between these two groups, which García does not mention. Matt García, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Univ of North Carolina Press, 2001), 89, https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=mOJ46fWrkYgC&oi=fnd&pg=PR10&dq=matt+García&ots=adMpfVnMx9&sig=5CpinV_IFsjC6DE249msVCT3xz0.

¹³⁰ Balderrama, *Decade of Betrayal*.

¹³¹ The depression affected adult Americanization programs even more drastically. “Whereas Americanization work would continue in segregated elementary schools until the termination of segregation, adult Americanization began to wane in the late 1930s.” González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 59.

¹³² “Hill Attacks Heavy Influx From Mexico,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, October 11, 1929.

schools had fallen by 122 pupils and 234 pupils.¹³³ During the economic crisis ideas about citizenship became even more important than ever, and as a result, a rising generation of Mexican Americans began to resist the established patterns of segregation in the region.

A system of segregation that relied on materialist, Progressive, and benevolent language which at times seemed to be in opposition to racial bigotry, is not as visible within the archive. In San Bernardino education records, the language outright racism such as the Mexican as menace, public health concern, and a violent threat is rare, perhaps this is why very few studies of San Bernardino County segregation have been conducted by scholars. However, studying the policy of Benevolent Americanization provides us additional insight into the diversity of segregation policy in California and sheds light on the relationship between education and citriculture. Assessing Benevolent Americanization also provides the opportunity to study alternative desegregation techniques. A segregation system that used “individualism” and the “care” for the Mexican community as a key justification created a backdoor for grassroots activists to successfully enact change at the local level without engaging in litigation. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, a tide of Mexican American activism swept through the area producing many local activists who sought to change their communities and rewrite the rules.

¹³³ Ramona Elementary went from 686 to 564 students and Meadowbrook from 401 to 167 students. “First School Week Ends With 8,535 Students on Rosters Throughout City,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, September 24, 1932, Newspapers.com.

CHAPTER 5: Forging Local Citizenship:

Claiming Space, Belonging, and Building Community on Their Own Terms

Mexican and Mexican American communities such as Bryn Mawr grew substantially in the 1920s. However, the Great Depression and the subsequent repatriation movement in California provided yet another disruption to the racialized landscape in the citrus belt.¹ In the context of economic uncertainty and upheaval, Mexican and Mexican Americans pushed back against the country town social system, a system built on their exploitation and exclusion, and mobilized their place within the citrus country town to make claims for local citizenship. In this chapter, I trace the ways in which Mexican and Mexican Americans negotiated their position within the racialized landscape and insisted on their community membership and belonging through homeownership, labor activism, and the Spanish language press. I focus on these three different avenues to show how the Mexican American community engaged in multiple, often overlapping processes of claiming space, whether it be physical space, space within labor, political space, or social space. I follow the path of historian Vicki Ruíz who sought to “resist the temptation of privileging the workplace as *the* locus for claiming public space.”² I aim to show how these multiple “fronts” of resistance each contributed to a growing insistence on local citizenship at the local and regional levels.

¹ Balderrama, *Decade of Betrayal*.

² Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*, 138. Italics original.

Throughout this chapter, I use the term “local citizenship” as a lens to understand how local conditions like residency, homeownership, labor availability, and community ties shaped people’s social membership within their local community.³ Local citizenship is essentially how citizenship and belonging are constructed and understood at the local level. My use of the term “local citizenship” is adapted from Natalia Molina’s study of “social membership” in her book *Fit to be Citizens*:

Suspended indefinitely in this "not-yet-American" state, Japanese, Chinese, and Mexican residents of Los Angeles were excluded from the benefits of full social participation in the life of their city. Social membership is usually equated with citizenship status, but it is important also to investigate how those who were not citizens negotiate a sense of national identity calibrating notions of citizenship and democracy in the process. By shifting the focus to the local level, one can see the ways in which social membership is negotiated every day.⁴

In an attempt to understand the processes of regional racial formation, I trace how Mexican Americans understood and negotiated their citizenship status and social membership at the local level. As many scholars have observed, at the federal level Mexicans were eligible for citizenship under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, however, local practices of segregation often made achieving full citizenship rights unattainable.⁵

³ Recently law scholar Kenneth Stahl has written about literal “local citizenship” in the 21st century in which cities through ballot measures and laws override national law. “San Francisco is one of several American cities to grant noncitizens the right to vote in certain local elections, and it may soon become a trend. Since San Francisco’s move in 2016, at least five other municipalities have also extended the franchise to noncitizens, and many cities have considered doing the same in just the last few years. In essence, these cities are conferring a form of *local* citizenship on people who are not citizens, and in some cases are barred from ever becoming citizens at the national level.” My use of the term “local citizenship,” is not tied in debates about federalism but rather the construction of belonging in space. Kenneth A. Stahl, *Local Citizenship in a Global Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 2, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316661352>.

⁴ Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens?*, 14.

⁵ “The treaty’s grant of citizenship to those Mexican people who chose to remain in the newly acquired U.S. territories was significant because, during this time - and for decades thereafter - the right to naturalization was solely granted to free white persons. Granting Mexican people citizenship en-masse indicated that in the eyes of the federal government, Mexicans were viewed as “white enough” to be citizens.” And “Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo granted Mexicans federal citizenship, which was significant in terms of civil rights

As a result, community members negotiated understandings of national citizenship, residency, and racial hierarchy to carve space for themselves within the country town social system. In so doing they challenged the utopic vision of a white grower community.

Part and parcel to insisting upon local citizenship and social membership is being seen as an individual. In the majority of grower documentation Mexican workers are conceptualized as a nameless and faceless mass of workers, only defined by their race and their labor. In my analysis of community members' struggles for local citizenship, I worked to uncover the names and family connections of community members by cross-referencing census and San Bernardino County accession records with oral histories, and community archival sources, which I compiled. Providing the names of these community members seeks to counter the erasure of their community from existing archives. In the late 1920s and 1930s, community members sought to make space for themselves within the racialized landscape and through my work, I seek to make space for them both inside the archive and in historical context, particularly within the context of their neighborhood and livelihood.

but would not necessarily enable Mexicans to exercise the political rights that would come with state citizenship. The latter came into sharp relief as states determined their own practices of segregation, many of which would be contingent upon white and nonwhite racial identities.” Nájera, *The Borderlands of Race*, 24. See also Laura E. Gómez, *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race*, Second edition, Book Collections on Project MUSE (New York: University Press, 2018).

Homeownership and Community Building

In the late 1920s, an increasing number of families asserted local citizenship through home and land ownership. In many ways, the development of the Bryn Mawr neighborhood defies the dichotomy set up in the literature about the Mexican colonia structure. Scholars of California's citrus industry, Matt García and Gilbert González posit two types of communities in their analysis; those which make a home within company housing projects and those that exist outside of them.⁶ However, while Bryn Mawr, as I state in chapter 2 is not a company town, the subdivision structure was not fully outside of industry control. The Bryn Mawr Mexican neighborhood was subdivided and owned first by white grower elites specifically to control Mexican workers, but within Mexican subdivisions, residents had the opportunity to own their land and build community. Bryn Mawr does not fit the dichotomy García and González set up. Bryn Mawr Mexican residents' ability to own their own land gave them comparatively more power than their counterparts living in company towns, although their power was contingent and embattled.

The late 1920s and 1930s saw an increase in Mexican American land ownership rates, according to the San Bernardino accession records. On Juanita Street (Gardena subdivision), for example, only two families owned property in 1927, however, by 1933, 11 families owned their properties. By the end of the decade, 25 families owned property in the subdivision. On 1st Street (Bryn Mawr tract), only one family owned property in

⁶ We see the dichotomy in García's work when he compares the West Barrio in Clairmont which was company housing to the Mexican created community of Arbol Verde. García, *A World of Its Own*, 71.

1926. By 1931, 12 families owned property there. At the close of the decade, the number had risen to 15 families owning 23 of the 30 available lots or 73% of the lots. Land ownership was a direct way to physically claim space within the citrus country town boundaries through official documentation such as deeds and county accession records. Although the subdivisions were created by and initially owned by the white elite, taking ownership of the lots, building one's home, and even having ones' name in the official county accession records brought a myriad of benefits. Owning a house helped preserve savings and build wealth, it provided a home to multiple generations of family members, among other benefits, but it was also a powerful way to insist on the presence of Mexicans in the citrus country town construct.

As Inland Empire scholar Genevieve Carpio has explained, company town residents faced a specific form of precarity, “the gains from owning houses were tempered by workers’ inability to purchase the land their homes were built upon. Instead, the benefits of long-term homeownership were as secure as a house built on sand. They were tied to the workers’ tenure on the ranch and vulnerable to their employers’ whims.”⁷ Since Bryn Mawr was not a company town, residents did not face the same vulnerabilities. Land ownership in Bryn Mawr allowed the Mexican American community increased autonomy and the enhanced ability to accrue financial stability. At the same time, the country town social system present in Bryn Mawr limited the community’s power. Not all residents were able to purchase the land they lived on. Those

⁷ Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*, 112.

families paid rent to either Bernice (Frink) Paxton, the “Landlady of Juanita Street” or packinghouse owner Allen Break, both members of the citrus country town elite who had significant investment in the citrus industry. Space was still segregated, racial capitalism maintained a cycle of poverty, and police surveillance was ever-present, but Mexican American residents of Bryn Mawr had comparably more benefits and access than their company town counterparts.

As Mexican Americans exerted increasing control over their land and housing in the early 1930s, the neighborhoods were no longer primarily referred to by the white subdivision names. The Mexican American residents of the Bryn Mawr Tract and Gardena Tract subdivisions referred to the spaces as the 1st Street neighborhood and Juanita Street respectively. Renaming is one of many community placemaking strategies which transformed white-created subdivisions into vibrant neighborhoods with a thriving Mexican community. To respect and honor the Mexican and Mexican American placemaking I will refer to these neighborhoods henceforth as 1st Street (formerly Bryn Mawr Tract) and Juanita Street (formerly Gardena Tract). Together these streets made up the community of Mexican Bryn Mawr.

Curiously, Mexican Bryn Mawr was not on the periphery. Instead, both 1st and Juanita Streets flanked the main thoroughfare, Barton Road. Barton Road was the main street that connected Loma Linda and Bryn Mawr to Redlands. The streets were also adjacent to the train station, the grocery store, post office, as well as the main packinghouses, and surrounding the entire area were acres and acres of orange groves.

The centrality of Mexican space spatially mirrored how crucial the community was to the success of the citrus industry. The vast majority of the Mexican and Mexican American community worked in the orange groves. The men would pick in the fields climbing ladders with large bags of oranges slung across their backs. Women were employed in the packinghouses, and young girls would help their mothers with childcare and later went to work in the packing houses themselves. In times of desperate need, small children, derogatorily nicknamed *ratas*, would scurry through the groves picking low-hanging fruit to help augment their family's income.⁸ Despite the realities of labor exploitation, the 1920s saw the growth of the community, in terms of numbers and connectedness.

⁸ In interviews many former *ratas* speak fondly of their childhood role, while acknowledging the difficult labor they performed. Mayela Caro, Marissa Friedman, and Sarah Junod, Interview with Gary Lemos, Steve Reyes, and Lupe Perez, February 15, 2017, UCR Relevancy and History Project.

In the 1920s, the Mexican community was able to forge a tight-knit neighborhood

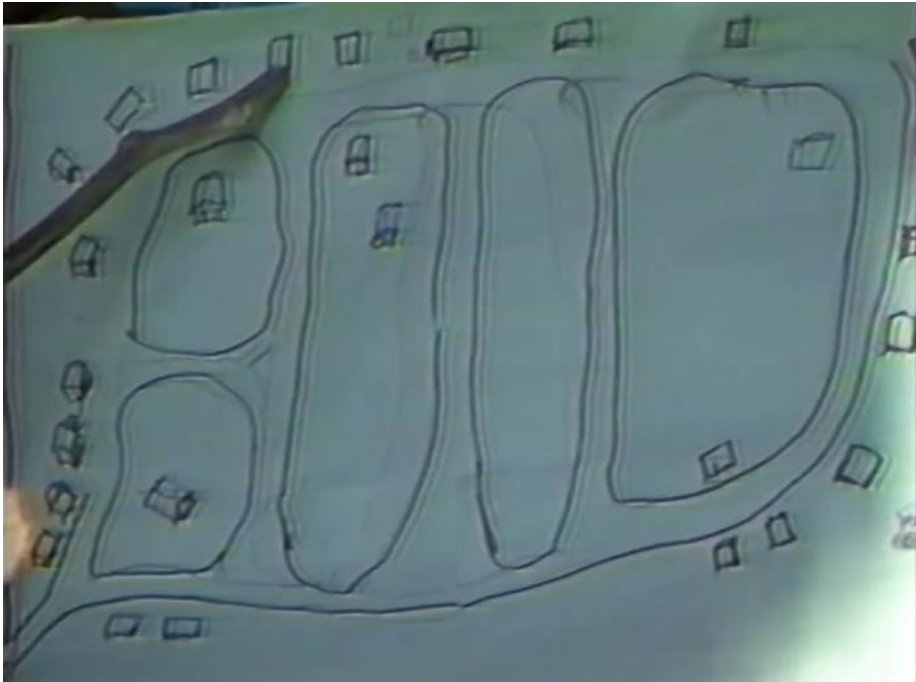


Figure 21: Still from *I Remember Bryn Mawr* documentary video. Filmed and Edited by Frank Coyazo. (Courtesy of Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society Digital Archive)

that continues to persist today.

In 1987, a group of community elders and community members led by Danny Landeros and Frank Coyazo created and

produced a documentary film called *I Remember Bryn Mawr*. In it, they documented a community event, as well as the memories of elders who lived in the neighborhoods. As an oral historian, I was expecting the video to contain many stories about what life was like in Bryn Mawr in the “early days.” While these stories are present, the detailed recounting of the names of the families who lived in Bryn Mawr and where they lived is of primary importance. Many of the interviews or stories told by the elders are vague, John Requejo, for instance, has his own space for an interview but states simply that life in Bryn Mawr was enjoyable. However, when elders discuss the neighborhood itself details abound. Neighbors and family members are consistently referred to by their

apodos or nicknames and are situated in the neighborhood. Information about who lived in what house when, and who they were related to is shared repeatedly. *I Remember Bryn Mawr*'s careful cartographic exercise is created with hand-drawn maps of 1st and Juanita Streets in which elders use sticks to point out the various homes and who lived in each of them. It simultaneously peoples the space, and it provides a key expression of ownership within space.

Early photographs from Bryn Mawr also illustrate self-cartography detailing how



Figure 22: Maria with Edmond, and Eugene Villareal taken in Bryn Mawr. (Courtesy of Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society Digital Archive, Cooke and Yanez Collection)

the ownership of home and space was understood by residents. The Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society (LLAPHS) has recently collected images depicting life in Bryn Mawr. One of these many striking images is the image (at left) of Maria (Mary in the census) Villareal with her sons Edmond and Eugene taken around 1922. Here they stand in an empty lot in the 1st Street neighborhood with a house in the background. Eugene, who stands with his toy horse, is wearing a white

garment that looks to be a christening gown with intricate lace. The family proudly stands in their neighborhood, taking up space and claiming their space within it. Further, their names are handwritten into the space of the photograph and thus into Bryn Mawr. They

locate themselves within Bryn Mawr, emphasizing their spatial connection. The 1920 census indicates that Gerardo and Mary already owned their house in the “Frink Mexican Camp, Bryn Mawr,” so they were already homeowners when this image was taken. In the photograph, they proudly stand within their community, in their neighborhood. The photograph of the Villareal family alongside the census data indicates their rootedness and belonging within the community. However, it is only in 1929 that the county accession records indicate that Gerardo Villareal and his wife Mary owned their home, lot 30 on 1st Street (then the Bryn Mawr Tract Addition). The Villareal family lived in Bryn Mawr until at least the 1950s.

LLAPHS was privileged to receive an image of Dolores Ortiz from Mary Cooke,



taken when Dolores was 13 years old in 1921. In the 1920 census, she is listed as living in the Cole Mexican Camp with her mother Daria, her father Santos, and her six siblings all of whom were born in California. In a video interview, neighbor and family member, Rafaela Landeros Rey remembers her Tia Daria’s house on Juanita Street as well as her prima Lola (Dolores). She also notes that it was Dolores’ elder sister, la Poche (Felicitas Ortiz), who was the

Figure 23: Portrait of Dolores Ortiz taken in Bryn Mawr in 1921. Dolores gives us a sly smile.
(Courtesy of Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society Digital Archive, Cooke and Yanez Collection)

first child born in “el Barrio Bryn Mawr” in 1904.⁹ The Ortiz family was deeply embedded in the Mexican community life of Bryn Mawr. They were deeply rooted in the neighborhood since at least the 1920s. It was in 1932 that the San Bernardino County Accession Records indicate that Santos Ortiz owned lot 37 and later lots 38 and 39 on Juanita Street.

An important and enduring sign of belonging was the many individually constructed homes that made up the Bryn Mawr Mexican neighborhood. While not all residents owned the land they lived on in the 1920s, many of the families renting subdivision lots or in the process of paying for the lots did own their houses, for they built their homes themselves. For instance, from family oral histories, we know that Manuel Rey built his and his wife’s adobe and rail wood home at 38 Juanita Street in 1927.¹⁰ The 1930 census indicates that they owned their home as well. In the 1920 and 1930 census taker instructions, the designation for “owned homes” is simple “A home is to be classed as owned if it is owned wholly or in part by the head of the family living in the home or by the wife of the head, or by a son, or a daughter, or other relative living in the same house with the head of the family.”¹¹ Nowhere does it give instructions for verifying this information with existing records, it is simply a statement asked of the

⁹ Danny Landeros and Frank Coyazo, *I Remember Bryn Mawr*.

¹⁰ In an oral history interview Manuel Rey indicates that he finished the home after he got a job with the WPA, about 1933. Frank Coyazo, “*I Remember Bryn Mawr*” *Tape 3*, 1987, pt. 09:25, http://archive.org/details/calolphs_000005.

¹¹ The language to for the 1920 census is identical to 1930. U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census, “Form 15-100 Fifteenth Census Instructions to Enumerators” (United States Government Printing Office, 1930), https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/census_instructions/1930_instructions.html, Bureau of the Census Library.

resident. It is logical that asked this question Manuel Rey who built his home and was in the process of paying off the land would answer that he owned the home. It was only in 1935 that the San Bernardino County Accession records indicate that the Reys owned lots 71 and 72 B. The Rey house, constructed from readily accessible building materials, endures today as Manuel Rey's grandson Frank Coyazo still lives there with his family even as the home is approaching its 100th anniversary.

Another example is the Martinez family home on 1st Street. In the *I Remember Bryn Mawr* master tapes Danny Landeros, Oddie Martinez, and Ernie Ortega sit down to discuss the 1st Street neighborhood together using a paper map to recount the many families who lived in the neighborhood. Oddie Martinez begins by situating the space they are in as Martinez family space, "And this little house right behind you is the house my uncle Phillip...and anyway this was Uncle Philip's old house."¹² The home, still

¹² Frank Coyazo, "*I Remember Bryn Mawr*" *Tape 9*, 1987, sec. 06:21-07:11, http://archive.org/details/calolphs_000011.



Figure 24: Still from I Remember Bryn Mawr Documentary showing Oddie Martinez and Daniel Landeros. Oddie points to his uncle Phillip’s house. Filmed and Edited by Frank Coyazo. (Courtesy of Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society Digital Archive and Frank Coyazo)

standing, was a primary place for family gatherings. Next to Philip Martinez’s home was an empty lot owned by the family and across from that another home which belonged to the Martinez family patriarch, Oddie’s grandfather. Oddie Martinez’s grandmother, Eslida Martinez, is listed as owning lots 2-5 in the Bryn Mawr addition. As Oddie recalls: “Between the next house and uncle Philip’s house was a large vacant lot... aquí era siempre nos juntabanos de familia todos, todos los Martinez.”¹³ The vacant lot became a

¹³ Coyazo, sec. 06:21-07:11.

familial and community space for large gatherings and celebrations. The combined lots, with houses or without carved out space in Bryn Mawr not just for a nuclear family but the extended Martinez family. Through the process of home building, the Reys, Villareals, Ortizes, and others in Bryn Mawr asserted their belonging to the community through their homes, houses they constructed with their own wages and their own labor.

The sense of ownership and belonging in the 1st and Juanita Street neighborhoods was galvanized in the 1920s and 1930s as kinship networks made Bryn Mawr into an extremely tight-knit community in which many were related by blood, by marriage, and religious ties such as godfathers and mothers (*compadres*). As already stated, Rafaela Landeros Rey was related to the Ortiz's and she later married into the Rey family, also living on Juanita Street. The Landeros family home was bought in 1928 (according to the County Accession records) and was right across the street from where Rafaela Landeros Rey and her husband Manuel Rey had recently built their own home out of railroad wood and adobe in 1927. The Villareal's on 1st Street were the cousins to Charlotte Morales, another Bryn Mawr resident who saved the images of Maria Villareal and Dolores Ortiz from the 1920s and 1930s.

Here I have provided just a glimpse into the layered relationships which tied the Bryn Mawr community together. As families grew and expanded, these subdivisions became Mexican space, a space for family, "Sunday dinners," and *Jamaicas* (church celebrations), which brought the community together for celebrations. In the 1920s, remembered in 1987 in the documentary, and today it means something to be born in

Bryn Mawr because the community actively created a sense of place and belonging. Their robust familial and community networks along with self-constructed homes and land ownership illustrate how the community not only claimed space but occupied it. The residents' land ownership, construction of their own homes as well as community and family building illustrate that these subdivisions, which were created to control the Mexican population, are spaces that are owned and controlled by members of the Mexican and Mexican American community. Rootedness in space and in family networks forged a sense of identity, particularly in the 1930s when migratory labor and company town structures were extremely common in other agricultural spaces.

In Bryn Mawr, some families were able to use the idea of rootedness to their advantage. When the citrus industry first began to rely on Mexican labor, many growers argued their laborers were “Birds of Passage” who would return to Mexico. However, as growers realized Mexican communities were not returning to Mexico they changed tactics arguing that Mexican labor was not a threat because laborers were tied to the land.¹⁴ As scholars like Genevieve Carpio have noted, “Mexican immigrants were racialized as inherently rooted.”¹⁵ Because Carpio’s analysis focuses on company towns in which the citrus employer maintained nearly total control over Mexican workers, she, rightly so, unpacks how racialized assumptions about rootedness furthered patterns of exploitation.¹⁶ However, Bryn Mawr residents who had a claim to their land could

¹⁴ Sackman, *Orange Empire*; Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*; Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*.

¹⁵ Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*, 110.

¹⁶ Don Mitchell has argued in his study of migrant labor that one’s migratory status could be useful for organizing as it allowed for worker mobility, “For Wobblies, mobility itself became a tool of class warfare.

mobilize rootedness and residency to play into citrus country town respectability. According to Ziegler-McPherson's study of Americanization, the California Commission of Immigration and Housing (CCIH), "Commission members possessed a Jeffersonian romanticism about rural areas, and considered cities a source of disease...The commissioners' idea of good housing was one of clean, sturdily built, privately owned, single family homes with yards and gardens."¹⁷ While large grower interests often clashed with the CCIH, Mexican's willingness to make homes was often cited as one of the reasons Mexicans should remain the primary citrus laborers.¹⁸ While rootedness served grower aims in some ways it also provided certain benefits to the Mexican residents. Part of local citizenship is having access to the space to claim a stake in the community and to have a non-transient identity. Homeownership, homebuilding, landownership, and the process of remembering were a means of claiming local citizenship and belonging within the citrus country town racialized landscape.

It is telling that what *I Remember Bryn Mawr* sought to do above anything else was to remember the name and family connections of those who lived in Bryn Mawr. The neighborhood documentary did more than share stories, it shared, reconstructed, and archived a neighborhood. *I Remember Bryn Mawr* remembers a geography forged

Such as strikes, and the subversive mobility that attended them, particularly threatened agribusiness concerns that relied on large pools of temporary labor at critical times throughout the season." Much of the Bryn Mawr population was not mobile, they used their position as residents to their advantage instead. Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, 65.

¹⁷ Ziegler-McPherson, *Americanization in the States*, 69.

¹⁸ Genevieve Carpio's third chapter, "From Mexican Settlers to Mexican Birds of Passage: Relational Racial Formation, Citrus Labor, and Immigration Policy" expertly traces shifting perceptions of Mexican mobility between the world wars. Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*.

through kinship ties rather than sterile lot numbers, producing a genealogical portrait of place. The process of remembering returned community members' names to the space of Bryn Mawr when that space was threatened by annexation attempts in the 1970s. In doing so, these memories re-establish ownership and belonging to that space and center the issues of home and land ownership in the spatial memory. The process of establishing ownership and belonging in the 1920s and 1930s, and later remembering this process in 1987, acknowledges the power that comes with home and land ownership. In the midst of the Great Depression, residency was mobilized by Mexican and Mexican American laborers in Redlands and Bryn Mawr.

Labor Organizing

The correlation between the Great Depression and increased labor struggles has been a well-covered topic in history and labor studies.¹⁹ Within the literature on California history, labor historians like Devra Weber have successfully pushed back against the notion that Mexican workers were docile and only organized in the wake of the Chicano movement. Labor organizing in the citrus industry in particular has been researched by González, García, and Ruíz.²⁰ As the historiography has acknowledged, the citrus industry was unique in its successful stifling of unionization. García notes that “In spite of activism by agricultural workers in other parts of the state, unionizing and strikes seemed relatively dormant in the citrus belt. The clout of citrus grower clubs, the impact

¹⁹ See Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (Cambridge [England]; Cambridge University Press, 1990); Susan A. Glenn, *Daughters of the Shtetl: Life and Labor in the Immigrant Generation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990); Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*.

²⁰ García, *A World of Its Own*; Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*; González, *Labor and Community*, 1994.

of social planning, and the depression conspired to control Mexican union building throughout the 1930s."²¹ Despite the lack of success, scholars like González and García have provided in-depth views of particular strikes such as the 1936 citrus strike and the early history of Mexican American organizing from the Confederación de Uniones Obreras Mexicanas, which was reconstituted in the aftermath of the Great Depression to form the Confederación de Uniones de Campesinos y Obreros Mexicanos.²² Taken together, these studies illustrate how the citrus industry's cooperative organization effectively prevented successful unionization.

While the literature on strikes is robust in Orange County, Los Angeles County, and the San Joaquin Valley, there is no scholarly mention of strikes and labor activity east of Ontario. The invisibility of Inland Empire agricultural strikes is due in part to the LA bias in the literature, which has led scholars to overlook the history of the Inland Empire. It is only in the past few years that a new generation of scholars such as Genevieve Carpio and Mark Ocegueda have begun to critically examine the history of the Inland Empire. Upon further investigation, it is clear that residents of the Inland Empire, and for the purposes of this dissertation, residents of Redlands and Bryn Mawr, engaged in the rising trend of Mexican and Mexican American activism in the Depression Era. In this section, I discuss two forms of labor resistance, a local labor petition and a 1933

²¹ Matt García, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Univ of North Carolina Press, 2001), 118, https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=mOJ46fWrkYgC&oi=fnd&pg=PR10&dq=matt+garcia&ots=adMpfVnMx9&sig=5CpinV_IFsjC6DE249msVCT3xz0.

²² For more on the 1936 strike see Gilbert G. González, *Labor and Community*, Chapter 6, García and Clara Engle, *The Orange County Citrus Strike, 1936: Historical Analysis and Social Conflict*, 1987.

citrus strike.²³ First, I will provide the context for local and national strikes and the mounting labor tensions within the citrus industry.

Conditions during the Great Depression set the stage for labor and racial tensions in California. Environmental and economic conditions in the Midwest in the wake of the Great Depression fueled a migration of dispossessed poor white farmers to California from America's Dust Bowl. Waves of Midwestern immigration were not new, as historian Douglas Sackman notes "In the 1920s, 250,000 to 300,000 South westerners had moved to California. The 1930s saw perhaps as many as 400,000 enter the state. But while the earlier wave was absorbed without notice during a period of phenomenal growth, the latter migrants were made part of a public social drama."²⁴ White Midwestern refugees, often derogatorily referred to as "Okies" or "Arkies," were now cast as outsiders. Forces including class tensions, regionalism, and suspicion of migratory life earned Dust Bowl migrants the disdain of many in California. Growing animosity towards the "flood" of Midwest migrants was used to justify their exploitation as low paying farm labor. What emerged once "whites began doing 'nonwhite' work" was a disruption the citrus industry's system of racial capitalism, as Theobald and Donado note, "Either the conditions and circumstances of agricultural labor would have to improve to

²³ Zamora helped to expand what Mexican labor resistance looks like. His work includes a wide range of different forms of resistance. "This chapter seeks to demonstrate that Mexican workers responded with a wide array of actions that were defensive and combative, informal and formal, spontaneous and sustained.... Withholding ones labor, organizing spontaneously, establishing mutual aid societies and unions, forming regional federation of workers' organizations, and waging armed action represent important parts of this story. Instances of self-organization and evidence of political influences emanating from Mexico underscore the fact that despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles, Mexicans managed to issue an impressive response." Zamora, *The World of the Mexican Worker in Texas*, 55.

²⁴ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 215.

meet white standards, or the Okies would have to be shown to be as inferior as Mexican migrants.”²⁵ These conditions along with the rampant anti-Mexican sentiment as seen in the 1930s repatriation movement, meant that these new migrants threatened the place of the Mexican community.

Bryn Mawr community elder Fred Ramos remembers the influx of “Okies” into the area in the 1930s.²⁶ In an unrecorded interview, he indicated that the presence of these newcomers threatened the already precarious jobs of the Bryn Mawr community. In the wake of global economic collapse, and with the influx of competition, Mexican and Mexican American farmworkers’ livelihoods were at risk. They were in an increasingly precarious position as the Dust Bowl migrants, although disdained, were white. For many years, at least outwardly, citrus grove and packinghouse owners had lamented the “lack” of white labor. As the Great Depression began, packinghouse owner C.M. Brown responded to a labor survey stating that “we depend wholly and entirely on Mexican Labor for the gathering of the orange crop. There is no white labor available for this work, nor is there a probability that there will be.”²⁷ In the quoted letter and others, growers often framed their use of foreign labor as something they were forced to do due to local conditions.

In the years leading up to the Great Depression, citrus growers claimed to desire white labor while in practice only hiring racialized laborers who were forced to accept

²⁵ Paul Theobald and Ruben Donato, “Children of the Harvest: The Schooling of Dust Bowl and Mexican Migrants during the Depression Era,” *Peabody Journal of Education* 67, no. 4 (1990): 34.

²⁶ Fred Ramos, Unrecorded Interview, October 4, 2017, Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society.

²⁷ Brown to Isham, “Response to Packinghouse Survey,” September 20, 1929.

substandard wages. Grower's professed desire to hire white workers was a means to protect their status as leaders in the citrus country town community, and they often justified their hiring practices on a "lack" of white labor. In the midst of the Depression, tensions ran high as many openly questioned the racialized labor regime. An editorial in *The San Bernardino County Sun* called out what they felt to be grower hypocrisy, "The fruit industry insists there are no American fruit pickers. And whose fault is that? The fruit industry has not been willing to give the American a chance...If the fruit growers supported an organization to provide American fruit pickers there would be American fruit pickers."²⁸ The author calls out growers' intentionality in procuring racialized labor and calls into question growers' methods. With Dust Bowl migration, an influx of cheap white labor threatened the racialized labor system and allowed packinghouses to hire white labor for the substandard wages the industry "required." As San Bernardino agribusiness man F. A. Lucas stated, "In the past we have not been able to get sufficient white American labor for harvesting our crops in this county, but I believe that economic conditions have altered the situation."²⁹ The Depression and the economic desperation it left in its wake left a larger portion of white laborers desperate for work and eager to as Lucas said "avail themselves to the chance to make themselves independent of charity."³⁰ The proposed solution to alleviate white unemployment was to replace Mexican workers with white workers who would now, in the throngs of the Depression, accept substandard wages, "President George S. Hinkley of the county's relief committee said at the close of

²⁸ "Is This County to Become Peonized?," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, October 15, 1929.

²⁹ "Hire American Fruit Pickers, County Urges," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, September 6, 1933, 19.

³⁰ "Hire American Fruit Pickers, County Urges," 19.

the meeting that local agencies cooperating with the central boards will unite in the campaign to...place white labor in the peach, apricot, grape, and citrus groves throughout the county.”³¹ George Hinkley, one of the prominent members of the Mission District citrus country town elite, saw the Depression as an opportunity to keep labor costs down while satisfying the desire to hire white labor. Jobs in the citrus industry were not necessarily desired by the Mexican and Mexican American community as the industry was highly precarious and paid low wages. However, in the area, there were few other employment opportunities available to Mexican and Mexican Americans. Further, as discussed above, citrus work was family work as it was often that the entire family needed to labor to pull enough wages together. The threat of more cheap labor was a threat not just to the individuals but to families and the community at large.

While Mexican workers were at a disadvantage due to their ethnicity, when looking for laborers growers were also concerned with the worker’s residency. As discussed in chapter 2, growers often desired a labor force that was “on the ground” and ready to work, thereby favoring existing residents (regardless of their race) to those migrating to California. A collection of work inquiry letters sent to the Redlands Chamber of Commerce provides insight into the labor market and growers’ desires for labor in the early Depression era. One letter, written amid migration pressures, highlights local favoritism. John F. Fouche wrote the chamber in March of 1931 asking for employment “picking fruit at the present time.”³² In his plea for work he makes a point to

³¹ “Hire American Fruit Pickers, County Urges,” 11.

³² John F. Fouche to A. E. Isham, “Employment in Redlands,” March 21, 1931, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply, A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

mention his citizenship status to distinguish himself from other migrants, “I am a resident of California and a registered voter.”³³ However, despite being a resident of California, the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, A.E. Isham, makes it clear that local needs come first. His terse reply states, “We would not suggest that you come here to try and find employment in the oranges as we have not had enough work this year for our own local people.”³⁴ Rather than encourage further saturation of the labor market, Isham instead dissuades Fouche from coming to Redlands. In so doing, he guards the local residents' access to labor.

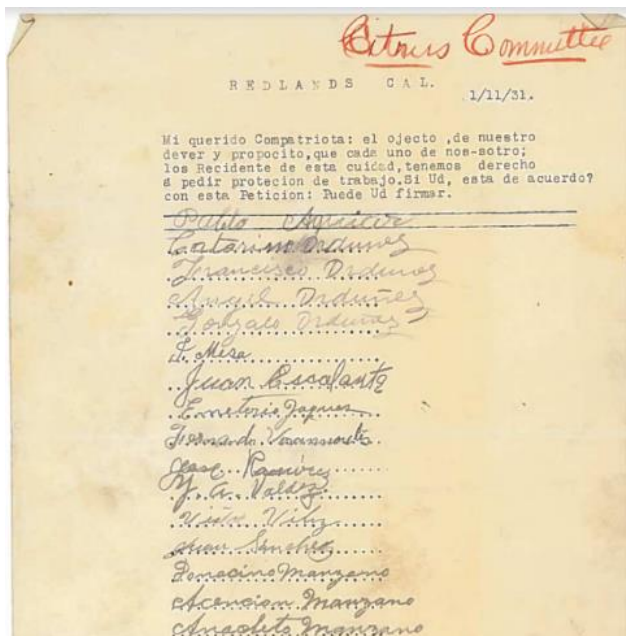


Figure 25: The first of 9 pages of the Redlands labor petition given to the Redlands Chamber of Commerce in 1931. (Courtesy Archives, A.K. Smiley Public Library Digital Archive.)

In 1931, Mexican residents attempted to mobilize their status as residents to gain access to work. Due to increasing labor pressures, on January 11, 1931, a petition with 216 signatures of Mexican and Mexican American citrus laborers was given to the Redlands Chamber of Commerce asking for improved worker protections. The petition stated that “Mi querido Compatriota: el objeto,

³³ The language of letters sent in the 1930s mirrors some of the letters sent decades earlier in the 1910s and 1920s, for more see chapter 2. John F. Fouche to A. E. Isham.

³⁴ A. E. Isham to John F. Fouche, “Employment in Redlands,” March 30, 1931, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply, A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

de nuestro dever y propocito, que cada uno de nos-sotro; los Recidente de esta ciudad, temenos derecho a pedir protection de trabajo. Si Ud, esta de acuerdo? Con esta Peticion: Puede Ud firmar.”³⁵ [sic] The petition called for the protection of workers who were residents of the city. In signing the document each of the 216 signatories was simultaneously claiming access to labor but also claiming personal space. They asserted that as local residents they were entitled to labor protection, although they do not specify what type of protections they are requesting. In the citrus workers’ initial statement, they make no reference to race. In so doing, they are asserting that they should be provided with protections solely on the basis of their residence. What these petitioners present is solidarity based on residency rather than on class solidarity with fellow farmworkers. In the heightened context of Depression era migratory labor, their appeals to residency also imply that those who are not residents cannot similarly demand the same type of protections.

In the context of mass migration, the petitioners are arguing that their status as Mexican residents outweighs the rights of migrants, even if those migrants are higher in the racial hierarchy. Residents’ claims to aspects of local citizenship can be linked to similar upheavals in how whiteness was understood across class divides in the 1930s. As Neil Foley argues in *The White Scourge*, "...poor whites in Texas and elsewhere in the South were heading in the opposite direction - losing whiteness and the status and

³⁵ In English: “My dear Compatriots: the object of our proposition is that each of us; the residents of this city, have the right to demand worker protections. You agree? With this petition: you can sign.” “Worker’s Petition, Redlands 1931,” January 11, 1931, VII Citrus Collection F Commercial Aspects 10) Labor, A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

privileges that whiteness bestowed. Poor whites in the cotton South came not only to be seen as a social problem but also to be located in the racial hierarchy of the "trash" of whiteness."³⁶ Here Foley traces a disturbance in the racial hierarchy within the Depression context which allowed space for Mexicans to "claim" the benefits of whiteness. In the Bryn Mawr context claiming whiteness was tied to membership to the citrus country town community. Further, by focusing on residency, the Mexican American community differentiates itself from those who are considered transient and migratory. The California State Chamber of Commerce stated that the inflow of migrants would "seriously disrupt the economy of California, jeopardizing wage scales, living standards, and social welfare programs."³⁷ Mexican and Mexican American community members in the barrios of Bryn Mawr and Redlands used these fears of migratory labor to secure their own positions. By identifying themselves as residents, not just of the Mexican community but to the citrus growing communities of Bryn Mawr and Redlands, they resisted the racialized structure of the citrus country town which stratified belonging along racial lines.

Further, on the back of the seventh page of the resident's petition for labor security was a handwritten statement: "the people who are born here are without work."³⁸ In their statement, the petition writers also mention encroachment from members of the nearby towns of San Bernardino and Colton. In this small addition to the petition, signers

³⁶ Foley, *The White Scourge Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture*, 6.

³⁷ California State Chamber of Commerce, "Migrants: A National Problem and Its Impact on California" (1940), 36, Unpublished Manuscript; Theobald and Donato, "Children of the Harvest."

³⁸ "Worker's Petition, Redlands 1931," 6.

claim both natural-born citizenship and local community citizenship as justification for their rights as workers. Signers' claim for birthright citizenship to both the nation and the city of Redlands adds extra emphasis to their residency claims. Of the 216 signatures, I was able to identify 72 of the signers in the census records for San Bernardino County.³⁹ From the 72 identified individuals, I observed that entire households signed the petition. For example, the five members of the Roque family living on Harold Street in Redlands in the 1940s signed the document. Higinio and Dorotea Roque (Dorothy in the census) along with their two sons and daughter-in-law wrote down their names. While they were residents, census records indicate that none of the Roques were born in the United States. Despite the national understanding of their citizenship status, as dictated by the census, their signatures on the petition assert their belonging within the community. Other families seem to have signed the petition thinking of the rights of their children to have access to work, as we see with the Sanchez family. Enuncion (Incarnation in the census), Manuel, and Valintin were California-born sons of Elijio (Elizeo in the census) who is listed as being born in Mexico in 1880. However, it is not just Elijio Sanchez's sons who signed the petition, Elijio a Mexican national did as well. The Roque and Sanchez families, as well as other petitioners, used the document to insist upon their insider status within the community. In doing so each signature is an individual claim to local citizenship and status which state documentation denies them.

³⁹ The statistics I compiled is liable to contain errors as census takers frequently misspelled or entered in incorrect information, particularly from Mexican residents. Further, some signers only used their first initial or signed with nicknames. To help alleviate error I attempted to search for families and cross reference names and households.

By identifying themselves as residents and citizens signers attempt to leverage their status as Redlands residents for economic purposes. From this emerges not only an understanding of national citizenship but also local citizenship based on residency. Obtaining access to work and suitable labor conditions is generally granted through social membership, in the citrus context, by belonging to the citrus country town system. In the petition, by stating “each one of us; residents of this city, have the right to request job protection”⁴⁰ the signers insist on their access to social membership by insisting that their status as residents should provide them the benefits of local citizenship. Here they, as residents, are petitioning their local government to provide them with access to work. Their assertion of local citizenship is a radical notion particularly within the citrus country town, which dictated a homogenous white protestant community of wealthy elites. These Mexican American assertions of residential status claim their social membership within the country town, not as passers-by, temporary laborers, or peripheral community members. As members of the country town, they then demand the same type of security and rights which are given to other (white) residents. The petition disrupts the already uneasy white/Mexican binary that shaped the citrus country towns of Redlands and Bryn Mawr. The signers argue that their status as residents, no matter their ethnicity or race, should be placed above the elevated racial status of Great Depression refugees.

⁴⁰ “Worker’s Petition, Redlands 1931.”

The Redlands Chamber of Commerce discussed the petitioners' demands on January 22nd. 1931.⁴¹ A month later, the secretary of the Redlands Chamber of Commerce A. E. Isham addressed a letter to H. E. Guerrero, stating that “the petition which you presented to the Chamber of Commerce was taken before a special committee for consideration.”⁴² The Chamber of Commerce’s committee indicates at least some level of alarm and concern on behalf of the Chamber and the citrus growing interests of Redlands. However, Isham stated that “We believe that local Mexican people will be given a better chance than they may have had.”⁴³ Isham’s vague and confusing reply seems to indicate a dismissal of the problem at hand. His answer conveys the sentiment of many citrus growers, that those they hire should be thankful for the job, despite the fact that below the surface they were painfully aware of their reliance on these laborers. Citrus’ reliance on racialized labor would be tested in 1933 with a series of labor strikes. Although the petition did not result in tangible change, the assertion of national and local citizenship would become a critical tactic to achieve a wide variety of changes.

With increased competition and limited availability of work during the Depression Era, wage labor was highly precarious. Economic precarity was perhaps even more pronounced in agricultural work in which employers hid wage cuts under the auspices of the piece-rate-wage system. Within piece-rate-wage systems, agricultural

⁴¹ A. E. Isham, “Chamber of Commerce Meeting to Discuss Rumors of Discrimination,” January 20, 1931, VII Citrus Collection F Commercial Aspects 10) Labor, A.K. Smiley Public Library Heritage Room Chamber of Commerce Collection.

⁴² A. E. Isham to H. E. Guerrero, “Matter of Employment of Local, Resident Mexican People,” February 4, 1931, VII Citrus Collection F Commercial Aspects 10) Labor, A.K. Smiley Public Library Heritage Room Chamber of Commerce Collection.

⁴³ A. E. Isham to Guerrero.

workers were paid based upon how many boxes, crates, or oranges a worker could process in a single day. Piece-rate work meant that the California state minimum wage was not guaranteed to workers in the citrus industry. California instituted a minimum wage in 1916 at \$0.16 an hour and by 1920 the rate had risen to \$0.33 an hour. By 1933, the state had risen the minimum wage for women and minors to \$0.275.⁴⁴ Despite these gains for California labor, the national minimum wage would not be set until 1938 at a rate of \$0.25 an hour and there was no guarantee that agricultural workers would be able to achieve minimum wage.

Wage depression was a particular problem in the citrus industry as the established citrus cooperative organizations functioned as a loose cartel, sharing the labor process, and discussing wage rates.⁴⁵ As González notes, “across the United States no other agricultural enterprise was as tightly organized into cooperatives as was California citrus.”⁴⁶ In so doing, the industry and therefore the citrus country town community could prosper despite the global economic downturn. In Redlands and Bryn Mawr, the citrus industry retained large profit margins despite the international economic disaster. An article from the *Redlands Daily Facts* indicated that “net returns per acre had grown 300 percent improvement in Southern California’s citrus industry during the last season.”⁴⁷

⁴⁴ “New Woman’s Wage Scale for Orange Packing,” *Covina Argus*, July 21, 1933.

⁴⁵ “Over the period from 1890 to 1920, they shaped citrus production in southern California into a vertically integrated cartel of great economic prowess and efficiency, rivaling any in the industrialized Northeast.” Moses, “The Orange-Grower Is Not a Farmer,” 24.

⁴⁶ González, *Labor and Community*, 23. Cooperatives were business organizations not unions. For more information about citrus collectives see “Chapter 1: History, Labor and Social Relations in the Citrus Industry”

⁴⁷ “Better Profits Realized by Bryn Mawr Citrus Growers During 1935,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, December 13, 1935, sec. page 15, Newspapers.com.

The industry's exponential improvement was made on the backs of laborers who struggled within the cooperative and piece-rate systems to make a living wage. Oral history testimony from Redlands resident Carl Sepulveda illustrates patterns of exploitation:

And so the farmers will argue that no, that there wasn't, the labor wasn't available, but it was. But they didn't want to pay what the pickers were demanding and in those days we'd go to a grove and the Foreman would say. 'Well, the packinghouse says that they'll pay you twenty-five cents a box. Do you want to take it?'⁴⁸

Growers would utilize fears of scarcity as well as the prices of nearby packinghouses and groves to drive down prices. By making sure that other citrus businesses were paying around the same rate, workers were forced to accept these paltry wages. These wage profits then lined the coffers and made the groves more and more profitable despite the economic downturn.

Within the closed cooperative system workers needed to represent themselves. During the 1930s, various unions attempted to gain power and secure rights for their workers. However, the cooperative organization of the citrus packinghouses created a formidable force to counter worker resistance. The citrus country town social system of powerful elites and paternalistic grove owners meant that citrus business interests were the white community's interests. These overlapping structures often led to policing in the name of preserving industry. What emerges is a near vigilante policing structure,

⁴⁸ Carl Sepulveda, *Citrus, Labor, and Community in East San Bernardino Valley: A Conversation with Carl Sepulveda*, March 22, 1995, 22.

exemplified by Theodore Krumm, the head of police and one of the largest citrus growers in the region.

Krumm was a prominent community member, grower, police officer and was well connected with other public officials like A.E. Isham from the Redlands Chamber of Commerce and educator Grace C. Stanley. Carl Sepulveda's oral history testimony again sheds light on Redlands local conditions:

He advised my cousin... that whenever the union representatives would show up in the morning to try to talk the workers into joining the union, to call him... So here he comes Captain Krumm with several police officers. They took these guys to jail that were trying to get pickers to sign up for the union. They weren't using any kind of strong-arm tactics or anything, just asking them if they wanted to join the union. I think there were four or five of them. They hauled them off to jail. That Captain Krumm, he was a real tough man.⁴⁹

Sepulveda's oral testimony underscores Krumm's frequent displays of aggressive policing despite the peaceful nature of the union organizers. His ability to send labor organizers to jail indicates the vast power Krumm wielded. As part of the close-knit citrus country town network, he embodied the ideal of the agribusiness and community leader that was advocated by the Country Life Movement. As a result, he was able to act with impunity to maintain his own, and therefore the community's citrus business interests. Krumm's criminalization of labor organizing sent a strong message to workers: unionization would not be tolerated, and the growers had the ability, finances, and resources to put a stop to these movements.

⁴⁹ Sepulveda, 24–25.

In 1933, in light of the lack of responsiveness to the 1931 petition, and the actions of citrus elites like Krumm, Mexican American citrus laborers began to demand unionization.⁵⁰ Citrus workers would attempt to utilize union bargaining or, if needed, engage in a strike. In December of 1933, the “Citrus Growers and Management in the District of Bryn Mawr, Mentone, Highland, East Highland, and Redlands” were summoned to meet with the Federal Labor Union #19060 on January 2, 1934.⁵¹ The representatives failed to appear, and the meeting was rescheduled for January 4th. In the meantime, growers called an emergency meeting in San Bernardino. At that meeting N.B. Hinckley, the manager of the Bryn Mawr Fruit Growers’ Association, spoke about the “deputizing of reliable citizens for call in case of need.”⁵² Essentially, Hinckley called for the organization of vigilante justice, for “reliable” white citizens to subdue the organization of Mexican laborers.⁵³ The growers’ lack of respect for the labor union’s request and their subsequent aggressive reaction, indicate the amount of anxiety felt by the industrialists in the throngs of the Depression. An immediate call for police

⁵⁰ Although newspaper articles and letters sent during the 1933 strike do not actually indicate the ethnicity of the laborers, by looking at packinghouse surveys from 1929 they indicate that Mexican American laborers were the vast majority of workers in the citrus industry. When asked the packinghouses “Do you depend on Mexican labor in harvesting the orange crop?” All but two packinghouses indicated Mexican laborers represented less than 50% of their labor force. The respondents from Bryn Mawr indicated an 80% reliance and the Bryn Mawr Fruit Growers Association indicated they relied entirely on Mexican labor. Redlands Packinghouse Surveys, 1929 in the Smiley Library Heritage Room Chamber of Commerce Collection, VII Citrus Collection F. Commercial Aspects 7) Survey of Packinghouses 1929, 1936.

⁵¹ H.F. Warner and Charles Matthews, “To the Citrus Growers and Management in the District of Bryn Mawr, Mentone, Highland, East Highland, and Redlands,” December 26, 1933, VII Citrus Collection, F. Commercial Aspects 10) Labor, A.K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

⁵² “Growers Discuss Labor Problems,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 3, 1934.

⁵³ Much of the vigilante justice was centered on protecting white property as Theodore Krumm stated “We do not intend to have any physical violence... We intend to protect all property, the packing houses, the tanks in which are stored thousands of gallons of oil for protecting the groves from frost, and the lives of the workers.” Quoted in “Strike Fails to Develop in Local Groves,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 15, 1934, 4.

intervention recalls Carey McWilliams's description of the 1936 Orange County Citrus strike and "how quickly social power could crystallize into an expression of arrogant brutality in these lovely, seemingly placid, outwardly Christian communities."⁵⁴ In an effort to maintain grower profits a sense of vigilante justice took hold that was particularly devastating.⁵⁵

In 1933, grower fears were also heightened due to the tense atmosphere of the Great Depression labor agitation. This year was a significant flash point in unionization attempts with "thirty-one strikes in California in 1933 involving some 48,000 workers. By comparison, there were only thirty agriculture strikes in the rest of the United States that year, involving only 8,000 workers."⁵⁶ The many strikes dominated the front page of newspapers across the nation. The labor threat was not just a national concern it was a local concern as well. Other strikes in the nearby area included the highly visible Dairy Strike, which had spread from Chicago to Los Angeles, and the Lettuce Strike in the Imperial Valley. In anticipation of citrus strikes, local agribusinessmen had met with other California growers in Los Angeles to discuss the lettuce and dairy strikes and to come to a consensus on how to break these movements.

⁵⁴ McWilliams, *Southern California Country; an Island on the Land*, 220.

⁵⁵ For more on extralegal violence against Mexicans and Mexican Americans see Monica Muñoz Martinez, *The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas*, 2018, 24. Her study of vigilante justice and extralegal executions in Texas sheds light on the ways in which Mexican populations were policed within and outside of the law and the way in which these periods of terror were sanctioned by the state. Her book, "documents the stories of those murdered through extralegal executions, but just as important, it lingers in the aftermath of violence to document what happened next- the parts of life rarely recorded in mainstream histories or boarder corridos. It reveals the families, neighbors, and communities connected to and shaped by the violence communities that, in turn, had to figure out how to respond to the injustice."

⁵⁶ Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, 134.

Initial news reports indicated a united front of optimism among growers. The article states that “It appeared unlikely that a strike of orange pickers would develop, the California Fruit Growers Exchange said because these workers are skilled laborers, well paid and carried by the individual growers and packinghouses the year-round.”⁵⁷ The Exchange’s insistence that the citrus laborers were “skilled” is in direct contradiction to how citrus agribusinessmen treated their workers. Labeling workers as “skilled” is a rare admission of the irreplaceability of Mexican laborers, as most public sources from growers indicated they thought of citrus workers as common and “replaceable” laborers. The California Fruit Growers Exchange’s assessment of the laborers’ conditions, although meant to indicate that these laborers were better treated than others, indicates instead the conditions that made union organizing a formidable task. The indication that the livelihood of these laborers was “carried by” individual industrialists for the entire year illuminates the laboring community’s dependency on the whims of individual growers. In many cases, the livelihoods of Mexican and Mexican American community members depended on a single crop and singular industrialist, who often controlled the town they lived in and, in some cases, even owned the property they lived on.

Growers’ fears of strikes were validated by the distribution of strike flyers. These flyers outlined the strikers’ demands in both English and Spanish. Wary of the force of these movements the growers sought to use their cooperative structure, citrus country town social network, and control of the media to reach quick and decisive victory. The

⁵⁷ “Citrus and Produce Growers Meet with Dairy Interests in Discussion of Strike Threat,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 10, 1934.

strike was organized by the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union (CAWIU), the same union that was currently leading the Lettuce Strike in Imperial Valley.⁵⁸ In 1933 the CAWIU had enacted the San Joaquin Valley Cotton Strike with over 47,500 participants of different races including Mexicans, whites, and Filipinos.⁵⁹ The basis for these strikes was class solidarity and economic demands.⁶⁰ On Wednesday, January 3, 1934, at Jure Hall in Redlands, the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union outlined specific demands including base pay of \$0.60 an hour for both pickers and packers and the furnishing of clippers and sacks by the packinghouses.⁶¹ The demand for a base pay indicated the union and the workers' disdain for the piece-rate system, which was a central feature of labor exploitation within the industry. The union also calls attention to another method cooperatives used to limit pay and reap additional profits, forcing pickers to pay for citrus picking equipment.⁶²

⁵⁸ "After two years of relative inactivity following its defeat in Imperial Valley, in 1930, a reconstituted communist agricultural workers union...emerged in 1933 as a powerful force for change. Renamed the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union (CAWIU), the communist union led what historian Cletus Daniels called the "great upheaval" of 1933." Mitchell, *Lie Of The Land Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, 134. For more on the Lettuce Strike see Mitchell's seventh chapter "Reclaiming the Landscape: Learning to Control the Space of Revolt"

⁵⁹ For more see: Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*.

⁶⁰ "At the same time that migration unsettled the category of whiteness, it allowed for new forms of racial affiliation. Where solidarity had previously been drawn along racial lines, the broad exclusion of migrants of different backgrounds created the conditions for an expanded social consciousness based upon shared employment and propinquity...Scholars of the Depression era have highlighted such moments of multiracial interaction, but their potential for social transformation was limited. Over time, whiteness and its affiliated privileges were reinscribed." Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*, 160–61.

⁶¹ Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union, "Orange Pickers and Packing House Workers Young and Old Attention," January 1934, VII Citrus Collection F Commercial Aspects 10) Labor, Smiley Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection. Grower's tactics for recuperating costs have been noted by González as well, Gilbert G. González, *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900-1950*, 32.

⁶² "Moreover industry-wide policy required pickers to pay for equipment such as clippers, gloves, and, in some instances, for the canvas bags into which the fruit was placed when picked. Associations also generally charged the picker for transporting them to the groves whether they utilized the service or not.

While the workers were organizing, members of the Redlands Chamber of Commerce expressed their concerns about the possibility of citrus strikes. Police Commissioner Krumm noted his outrage over the demands, stating that “To pay common labor 60 cents an hour is more than I can see.”⁶³ What the union was demanding was nearly double the established California minimum wage. However, what Krumm seems to miss is that part of workers’ insistence on a high wage was a recognition that citrus work was not “common labor.” The union, echoing the sentiment of the California Fruit Growers Exchange, insists upon the skilled nature of citrus work. The union uses this conception to their advantage as a reason to strike rather than as a reason not to. By insisting on their level of skill as justification for deserving a much higher wage, the strike demands were an attempt to disrupt the established system of power. As discussed in chapter 1, in the advertised narrative of the citrus industry the labor of Mexican workers was erased. By insisting on a high wage, the workers were acknowledging how essential their labor was to the industry. They sought to reverse the power dynamic, indicating that it was the growers who were reliant on Mexican labor. A strike would test whether or not the industry would be able to replace Mexican workers, as they so often threatened to do.

Emphasizing the skilled nature of citrus work is related to the previous assertions of local citizenship within the citrus country town system. As discussed in chapters 1 and 3, a hallmark of the Country Life Movement was that agricultural work should be highly

Consequently, a portion of the growers costs were recovered through placing them on the shoulders of the workers" González, *Labor and Community*, 1994, 32.

⁶³ “New Attempt to Organize Strike,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 4, 1934.

valued because it relies on education and skill. Further, those who engage in skilled agricultural work, “agricultural artisans” as Bailey called them, are then part of the country town social system; they are the cultivators of industry and therefore the community’s wealth and prosperity.⁶⁴ While growers understood the citrus country town to be white space, Mexican strikers were attempting to make space for themselves within this construct. By insisting on the skilled nature of citrus picking and packing, Mexican and Mexican American strikers are insisting that they too belong in the citrus country town system. In so doing they are knocking at the door of citrus country town local citizenship and belonging, threatening to burst the imagined white utopia agribusiness leaders were seeking to uphold.

Mexican American workers began striking in Redlands on January 15, 1934.⁶⁵ Although headlines in the *Redlands Daily Facts* claimed that the strike had already “failed” to materialize the day it began, the strike continued unabated until January 23rd. Redlands newspaper accounts, which were highly sympathetic towards the packinghouse owners, claimed that there was no real trouble. On the first day of the strike, a front-page column in the *Redlands Daily Facts* reads, “If there is a strike of orange pickers in Redlands it was impossible to discover.” They also included a roll call of packinghouse owners and the number of workers currently in the groves, including Bryn Mawr

⁶⁴ Bailey, *The Country-Life Movement in the United States*, 138.

⁶⁵ On January 11th the Mexican Confederation of Unions came together with Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union to pressure the growers. The strike was called on January 15 at 2:00 pm after grove owners refused to meet with the unions to discuss their demands. See “Higher Wages Are Demanded,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 11, 1934, and “Strike Fails to Develop in Local Groves,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 15, 1934.

packinghouses.⁶⁶ The paper also claims that workers were not striking but “choosing to stay home” and that only a small number of “radicals” were participating. The media stated the numbers at “15 or so regular pickers are on strike out of 350”; while the union organizers insisted that “80 to 90 percent of the pickers are on strike.”⁶⁷ However, five days of front-page headlines about the strike as well as the arrests made by Krumm and the police force indicate that worker resistance was sizable.⁶⁸

Unfortunately, despite intense efforts by the Mexican American community, the growers were able to starve out the strikers. The growers’ collaboration with law enforcement, and union financial issues ultimately broke the strike. The main cause of the strike’s failure was cited as a “lack of funds” from the labor headquarters in Los Angeles. An article states that “all available money has been diverted to Imperial Valley for the lettuce pickers’ strike.”⁶⁹ Without substantial funds, strikers and their communities were unable to support themselves or their families. Since the citrus industry was the central industry in the Bryn Mawr area, the entire community was affected and even systems of mutual aid were not sufficient to keep the community fed. At a final meeting of the union, there were over 150 citrus laborers who voted to give up the strike and return to work, without achieving their demands. With the collapse of the strike, citrus workers in

⁶⁶ The paper lists “Allen Break, Bryn Mawr, 14 men picking; no trouble.... Bryn Mawr Fruit Growers, 25 men picking; none have quit...Mission Citrus, 18 men picking; no trouble...Norwood Fruit, not picking” “Strike Fails to Develop in Local Groves,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 15, 1934.

⁶⁷ “Orange Pickers Strike Is Declared Failure,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 16, 1934.

⁶⁸ The *Redlands Daily Facts* outlined Krumm’s strategy “We have a map here, and each morning we will be informed by packinghouse foremen of where their crews will be picking that day. A pin with the packing house name on it will be placed on the map, so that we will know where every crew is working and where to go immediately we get a call [sic].” “Strike Fails to Develop in Local Groves,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 15, 1934.

⁶⁹ “Pickers’ Strike Comes to an End,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 23, 1934.

the Inland Empire would not become unionized, unlike other agricultural industries. Without the possibility of unionization, labor resistance shifted to a reliance on local networks for what Zamora calls “spontaneous and independent labor activity.”⁷⁰ While these instances of labor resistance may not be violent, climactic, or even successful, the petition given in 1931 and the 1934 strike indicates the tide of community activism among Redlands and Bryn Mawr citrus workers and the formidable power of citrus industrialists.

While the labor resistance I detail was largely unsuccessful in gaining direct results, attempts at unionization, strikes, and petitions were critical to disrupting the status quo of the citrus country town by insisting on the residential status and local citizenship of Mexican workers in the Redlands and Bryn Mawr area. While contemporary critics of labor activists attempted to paint the resisters as outsiders, strikers and petitioners maintained a focus on their “insider” or “residential” status in order to legitimize their demands and to assert their existence within the citrus country town landscape which sought to hide them from view. In the context of the citrus country town, even unsuccessful strikes and petitions were a significant assertion of visibility. Asserting and demanding membership to the citrus country town was a radical statement in and of itself. Further, labor resistance destabilized the established racial hierarchy in

⁷⁰ “Often without assistance or guidance from established and experienced groups, Mexicans most often relied on their own means to improve their condition. Self-reliance was especially evident in isolated areas where Mexicans waged individual or group acts of resistance as well as spontaneous strikes against their employers.” Zamora, *The World of the Mexican Worker in Texas*, 66.

the region.⁷¹ It denied the bifurcation of the citrus country town space and called its operating constructs of whiteness into question. Despite the seeming failure of substantial labor reform in the local citrus industry, Mexican Americans continued to insist on their local and regional citizenship through the Spanish language press.

Spanish Press – The Beginnings

In the late 1920s and into the 1950s Spanish language newspaper media helped to strengthen family and community ties across the disparate Mexican and Mexican American communities peppered throughout the Inland Empire. Scholars García and González have expertly noted how different Mexican communities had their own networks of communication. García, in particular, notes that some communities became particular “hubs” which he argues “provided necessary services to partake in an extended regional identity.”⁷² The newspaper *El Sol de San Bernardino (El Sol)* based in San Bernardino and the Pomona-based newspaper, *El Espectador*, helped foster a political community of Mexican Americans across the many different cities of the Inland Empire; *El Espectador* also emphasized the community’s rooted rather than migratory life. What emerges is a rooted political community in which ideas about citizenship, particularly local citizenship, were debated and solidified.

⁷¹ While much of the literature on the racialized landscape of Southern California discusses the white/Mexican binary, other scholars have noted exceptions, “Contests between Mexicans and whites occupied the center stage of regional racial relations until midcentury, but not exclusively so. Rather, concerns with Puerto Rican, Filipino, and white Dust Bowl migrants each threatened to unsettle regional racial hierarchies.” Carpio, *Collisions at the Crossroads*, 11.

⁷² García, *A World of Its Own*, 70.

As discussed in chapter 2, the San Bernardino newspaper *El Sol* was first launched on January 29, 1926, under the editorial direction of Roberto Isaias, a newspaperman from Los Angeles. *El Sol* was one of the first Inland Empire newspapers written in Spanish, but unfortunately, copies of the paper have not survived. While *El Sol's* English sister publication *The San Bernardino County Sun* published articles describing the Americanization work being done by the paper, looking closer at *El Sol's* mentions in *The San Bernardino County Sun* tells a different story. While my second chapter assessed *The San Bernardino County Sun's* promotional materials regarding *El Sol*, here I discuss actual *El Sol* articles which were reprinted in *The San Bernardino County Sun*. The few articles which were translated and reprinted from *El Sol* into *The San Bernardino County Sun* do not discuss Americanization, instead, they speak to community building across San Bernardino County.

In August of 1926, *El Sol* editor Roberto Isaias announced the results of the El Sol Queen contest, one of many popular Mexican American beauty contests in Southern California⁷³ An article appeared in both English and Spanish announcing that Filomena Saucedo of San Bernardino and Guillerma Chavez of Colton were elected as queens and representatives at the Mexican Independence Day Celebration at the Orange Show Grounds. Although the English version of the article states that the Queen contest was created by *El Sol*, no such assertions are made in the Spanish version referring to the

⁷³ “The innumerable barrio beauty pageants, sponsored by *mutualistas* patriotic societies, churches, the Mexican Chamber of Commerce, newspapers. And even progressive labor unions, encouraged young women to accentuate their physical attributes. Carefully chaperoned, many teenagers did participate in community contests from La Reina de Cinco de Mayo to Orange Queen.” Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*, 55–56.

event as “El Concurso para ‘Reina de las Fiestas Patrias’ y ‘Princesa Mexicana de Colton.” The article describes not a newspaper-created event but a pre-existing community celebration. The Queen Contest was a popular event that would continue into the 1980s and was revived in 2010.⁷⁴ As an indication of the popularity of the contest, the winner, Saucedo, received 214,411 votes, while Chavez received 18,795 votes. The substantial number of overall votes indicates large community participation. The Queen Contest was an important community event, and while it is concerning that *The San Bernardino County Sun* claims the event was conceived of by *El Sol*, what is critical is the fact that these community events now had a place where they could be reported. *El Sol*’s coverage facilitated the spread of information between separate Mexican communities in the Inland Empire and allowed others to experience these events through *El Sol*’s reporting.

In addition to reporting on preexisting neighborhood celebrations, *El Sol* did start its own event, which was a Christmas charity for children.⁷⁵ While a Christmas charity event seems at first to align itself with white social club charity movements and Americanization handwringing, this event’s main function was to give out toys to Mexican and Mexican American children. What we can also glimpse from the coverage of these charity events in 1927 and 1928 is the extent of *El Sol*’s readership. In promotional advertising, the Sun Company often touted that *El Sol* had a newspaper

⁷⁴ My great grandmother Victoria (Colunga) Saldivar was a runner-up for Queen of Colton in 1945.

“Cecelia Rosas Elected Queen,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, September 4, 1945, Newspapers.com

⁷⁵ “Arrange Party for Mexicans,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, December 24, 1927, Newspapers.com;

“Newspaper Editor to Distribute Gifts Among Mexican Children of Poor Families at Christmas,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, December 18, 1928, Newspapers.com.

circulation of 5,000 with 20,000 readers and that “No other Spanish newspaper in the United States has as large a circulation in one county.”⁷⁶ While these numbers may have been inflated, we see from responses to the Christmas charity that the readership included those in San Bernardino City, Colton, and Bryn Mawr.⁷⁷ *El Sol*'s media network, as well as existing family networks, connected disparate Mexican and Mexican American neighborhoods across the Inland Empire.

In the last article of the Isaias controlled *El Sol* available, Isaias reports on the delay of actress Dolores del Rio for her trip to the National Orange Show. Isaias states that he is informing “la colonia Mexicana y en general a las de habla espanola” of Del Rio's delay. The way that the phrase “la colonia Mexicana” is used indicates a larger community of people and readers, which goes beyond existing city and community lines. Isaias's phrase is speaking not simply to the Mexican community of the City of San Bernardino, it is referring to a larger regional version of “la colonia,” a Mexican readership in the San Bernardino Valley.⁷⁸ The use of the phrase “la colonia Mexicana” illustrates the acknowledgment of regional connectivity between these different locations.

While we cannot know the content of *El Sol* itself beyond what is presented in *The San Bernardino County Sun* the reprints that exist do indicate that the paper, in

⁷⁶ “El Sol, Spanish Language Newspaper Is Year Old.”

⁷⁷ “Newspaper Editor to Distribute Gifts Among Mexican Children of Poor Families at Christmas.” Tomasa Hernandez of Bryn Mawr wrote into the paper “I am writing you a few lines to wish you happiness. I, Tomasa Hernandez, have four little brothers. I want some little pitchers, and please send some toys to my brothers. And if you can send them over I will be very very thankful. I am praying God to let you live many years so you can help us along Christmas days.”

⁷⁸ The assertions of “la colonia” are reminiscent of Anderson's “imagined community” forged through print culture. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

reality, did more than the Sun Company advertised. We see the beginnings of community building as *El Sol* circulated news and event information across disparate cities and townsites in the county. It seems that *El Sol* editor Roberto Isaias had to work within the constraints of the Sun Company but did invest in reporting on events, celebrations, and content that properly represented Mexican American neighborhoods, and with the use of this media, created a shared community space.

Spanish Language Press – Strengthening Regional Ties

While only fragments of *El Sol* survive, nearly the entire archive of the regional newspaper *El Espectador* survives. *El Espectador* was founded and edited by Ignacio “Nacho” Lopez in 1933.⁷⁹ An assessment of *El Espectador* articles from the late 1930s to the early 1940s indicates larger activist trends manifesting throughout the Inland Valley. *El Espectador* reported events in the larger Pomona Valley, extending into Ontario and Cucamonga. While these cities were about 25-35 miles west of Bryn Mawr, I use the content of *El Espectador* to illuminate larger patterns emerging in the region.

Through *El Espectador* I reconstruct an emerging regional political consciousness. Lopez focused his paper on publicizing events and incidents that did not make their way into the English newspapers. As García notes, “Translated as “the spectator” or “the witness” *El Espectador* gravitated toward the latter as Lopez committed

⁷⁹ For more on the history of *El Espectador* and its editor and founder Ignacio Lopez see García, *A World of its Own*, “Chapter 7: Sol y Sombra, The Limits of Intercultural Activism in Post-Citrus Greater Los Angeles.” In this chapter he focuses on mapping out the post-war environments of “intercultural relations during the 1940s and 1950s” (224) While García focuses on Lopez’s ideology and individual influence on the movement, my chapter will focus on the calls to action themselves and how they related to individual grassroots action outside of his purview.

himself to reporting violations of Mexican American civil rights in addition to the news of community gatherings and social events"⁸⁰ Lopez focused extensively on publishing stories of police brutality towards Mexican Americans, as well as alerting the community to ongoing boycotts and strikes that were happening in the region. Tracing *El Espectador*'s articles provides a view into the early activism, which was harnessed by residents in the Inland Empire to suit their specific needs. Later regional activism would result in the San Bernardino desegregation case *Lopez v. Seccombe* in 1944, which successfully desegregated public spaces in the city of San Bernardino.⁸¹

Historian Matt García has focused extensively on the role of Lopez and his newspaper in the region in the 1940s and 1950s.⁸² He provides a nuanced analysis of Ignacio Lopez and his collaborator, Puerto Rican San Bernardino newspaper man Engenio Nogueras, indicating how both “expressed the belief that most Mexican Americans experienced discrimination because of their own acquiescence to domination.”⁸³ García depicts how both Lopez and Nogueras sought to use their media platform to reform Mexican American political participation. Lopez and Nogueras

⁸⁰ García, *A World of Its Own*, 229.

⁸¹ Ignacio Lopez was the primary plaintiff for the case which sought to desegregate the public pools in San Bernardino. Recently Mark Ocegueda's work on the history of San Bernardino has traced the events and ramifications of the *Lopez vs Seccombe* court case. He states, “Their struggle for equal access to San Bernardino's public space culminated in 1944 with *Lopez vs Seccombe*, one of the earliest court cases that successfully invoked the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to desegregated public facilities.” *Lopez vs Seccombe* was cited in *Mendez vs Westminster* which desegregated Mexican schools in 1947 and it was Westminster which was used for the famous *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) desegregation case. Mark Anthony Ocegueda, “Sol y Sombra: San Bernardino's Mexican Community, 1880-1960” (Ph.D., United States -- California, University of California, Irvine, 2017), 95–96, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1978552588/abstract/3C1C436DD045455CPQ/4>.

⁸² García, *A World of Its Own*. See Chapter 7” Sol y Sombra”

⁸³ García, 231.

worked to engage Mexican Americans in the political process since they believed that discrimination stemmed from a willful lack of participation in the democratic process. They believed that once Mexican Americans took the time to vote, boycott, strike, and become active “citizens” the barriers of racism would crumble. Like the Americanization proponents before, they also focused on the idea of “citizenship,” but used it as a means to secure rights as American citizens. Rather than focus on the biographies or legacy of the newspapermen as García does, my analysis focuses on the content of the newspaper itself during the late 1930s to assess the messages that the readership was receiving from *El Espectador* and how its content fostered a regional consciousness across the disparate Mexican and Mexican American neighborhoods in the Inland Empire.

Through an analysis of articles in *El Espectador* written in the late 1930s, a trend of increased Mexican American activism is undeniable. Lopez and his newspaper were well known in the area. Martinez in her 1973 study on Mexican acculturation indicates that Lopez “has made a reputation for himself throughout Southern California by his fearless attack on any form of discrimination or prejudice against minority groups.”⁸⁴ The newspaper utilized multiple strategies, by reporting on events of police and government brutality and discrimination, reporting on and calling for collective action, and heavily stressing the importance of civic participation. By utilizing these strategies, the paper became a locus for a politically and civically conscious readership. The paper was part of the regional community, “Local villages extended to others in the region through the

⁸⁴ Ruth Lucretia Martinez, *The Unusual Mexican; a Study in Acculturation* (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, 1973), 21.

same kinship and *compadrazgo* system forming a type of regional network.”⁸⁵ The regional scope of the newspaper also functioned to instill a collective identity between different communities as boycotters in Ontario and strikers in Upland were covered in the same paper. The paper’s regional scope identified civil rights issues as more than local inconsistencies and habits; instead, they were portrayed as part of the larger fabric of Southern California Mexican and Mexican American life that needed to be rectified.

A headline from February of 1937, calls out “Pedimos Justicia,” or “We ask for Justice.” In the article, the author relays the story of a young man who was wrongly detained by the Ontario police and denied medical care. The article takes on a tone of righteousness and outrage regarding the treatment of all Mexicans in the area. Beyond calling attention to the incident, which would not have been featured in the English press, the author indicates that the representatives of the newspaper had called upon the mayor of Ontario to investigate the incident. The article ends with the affirmation, “*El Espectador* regrets the situation but demands justice.”⁸⁶ *El Espectador*’s editor and authors not only publicized incidents of discrimination, but they also directly engaged in the politics of city government to make their case and pursue equal treatment.

In many of the articles about civil rights, factual reporting is combined with direct appeals to action. Appeals to action were not just hyper-local but sought to illicit a larger response among fellow Mexicans. For example, *El Espectador* covered the boycott of the

⁸⁵ González, *Labor and Community*, 1994, 76.

⁸⁶ “Pedimos Justicia,” *El Espectador*, February 5, 1937, Cal Polly Pomona. “El Espectador’ lamenta lo sucedido pero demanda justicia.”

Ontario restaurant “al cantinero Hanna” after the owner treated Mexican patrons badly.⁸⁷ The article likens the Mexican community to a gentle but deep-seated river slowly carving away the cantina’s patrons and flow of Mexican cash through an organized boycott, “La colonia Mexicana de Ontario sigue como rio manso, pero hondo carcomiendole toda la clientela al cantinero Hanna.”⁸⁸ Crucially, within the article is an appeal: “suplican a los compatriotas de otros pueblos que cuando visiten Ontario se abstengan igualmente de patrocinar el mecinodado lugar.”⁸⁹ Here we see a direct demand but also solidarity based on race. Racism at the Hanna Cantina is not an isolated issue in Ontario, it is representative of a wider cause that necessitates “un frente unido” (a united front) of Mexicans from all different cities, towns, and townsites in the region. Boycotts and activism expand beyond municipal boundaries to a sense of regional connectedness and, at least, a hope for a united regional community.

Articles stress the importance of voting in local elections and recognizing one’s duty as a citizen of the United States. The journalists often call upon second and third-generation Mexican Americans to exercise their right to vote to help the wider community.⁹⁰ The political route is highlighted as the key to securing additional rights. The paper asks its readers, “Do you want economic and social power? You must obtain political power first.”⁹¹ In many other articles, political power is touted as a crucial

⁸⁷ Perhaps Hannah’s Market.

⁸⁸ “Continua El Boycot a La Cantina Hanna,” *El Espectador*, July 1, 1938, Cal Polly Pomona.

⁸⁹ “They appeal to fellow country men in other towns that when they come to Ontario they likewise refrain from supporting the aforementioned place.” “Continua El Boycot a La Cantina Hanna.”

⁹⁰ “El Voto Mexicano Fue Importante,” *El Espectador*, September 23, 1938, Cal Polly Pomona.

⁹¹ “Editorial: Mexico Aqui,” *El Espectador*, February 18, 1938, Cal Polly Pomona. “Quereis tener fuerza económica y socialmente? Pues obtendra políticamente primero.”

weapon in the struggle for achieving equality and respect. Political power is described as the solution to discrimination and other social ills. The paper's direct appeals to the Mexican American community advocate for "equality," "liberty," and "strength."⁹² These calls to action indicate a focus on achieving a strong political voice and an active fight for these rights rather than passive acceptance.

These pleas were not without direct political action. *El Espectador* also highlights various community organizations that were actively working to increase the Mexican American political presence in the area. One such group, the Latin American Club in Chino created a campaign to register all eligible citizens to vote. The article claims that "For the first time in the political history of this city it has found a Mexicano who has the faculty to register anyone who wants to be... They [the Latin American Club] beg fathers to urge their sons, it is now or never that they do their part, for their own good."⁹³ The article's desperate tone and direct appeal ring out like a call to arms. Through the creation of a Mexican American political base, it was believed that the community could exert its presence more forcibly. Only a month later the newspaper ran a short article about the Chino and Cucamonga school board elections. The article, as before, calls upon the residents to vote, insisting that registered voters should "go to the polls and make use of their privilege and duty."⁹⁴ The article also emphasizes the importance of the election and

⁹² "Editorial: Mexico Aqui." "lugar de importancia y de igualdad; lugar de fuerza y libertad."

⁹³ "El Tiempo Marcha," *El Espectador*, February 18, 1938, Cal Polly Pomona. "Por la primera vez en la historia politica de esa ciudad se encuentra un mejicano quien tiene a facultad de registrar a aquellos quiches deséen.... Se les suplica a los padres de familia que urgan a sus hijos para que hora o nunca hagan su parte para su propio bien."

⁹⁴ "Chino y Cucamonga Elegiran Nuevos Vocales al Consejo de Educacion," *El Espectador*, June 3, 1938, Cal Polly Pomona.

warns that “These individuals will decide the destiny of schools in those places.”⁹⁵ It is clear that as early as 1938, pointed efforts were being made by grassroots community organizations to increase the overall power of the Mexican American population through the exercise of voting rights. The resignification of American ideals such as, civic duty and free elections, is a focused move that speaks in part to Americanization ideals while also working to dismantle them.

In addition to mobilizing existing citizens to vote, the paper also promoted various methods to increase the number of Mexican Americans eligible for achieving citizenship. *El Espectador* highlighted various classes being offered at Chaffey College for adults. These are the same classes created by Merton Hill in his pursuit of Americanization and to prepare “the Mexican peon” for work in agricultural fields. However, when discussing these classes *El Espectador* focuses not on the importance of learning English or improving one's “American” capacities. Instead, these classes were seen as an opportunity to assist members of the community in achieving citizenship by studying the U.S. Constitution in preparation for naturalization.⁹⁶ Lopez’s reworking of the aims of Americanization to serve the movement’s interests in increasing Mexican American political power indicates a clever reversal of Americanization goals and expectations.

Becoming an American citizen did not need to result in the loss of Mexican culture. In fact, alternative classes and events that promoted Mexican culture rejected the

⁹⁵ “Chino y Cucamonga Elegiran Nuevos Vocales al Consejo de Educacion.”

⁹⁶ “Chaffey Ofrece Clases Nocturnas,” *El Espectador*, September 30, 1938, Cal Polly Pomona.

aims of Americanization. In 1938 the Cucamonga Mexican community with the help of Senorita Agripina González created a school in which to teach children the Spanish language. The newspaper praises the effort as important and belies a sense of ethnic pride in “our beautiful language.”⁹⁷ Cucamonga was the site of the Cucamonga Mexican Demonstration school, a focal point of Americanization, yet in reaction to oppressive Americanization new forms of culturally affirming education arose.

From the fragments of *El Sol* present in *The San Bernardino County Sun*, it is clear that Nogueras promoted similar ideas in his newspaper. Often Lopez would feature pieces by Nogueras in his paper, and García notes that the two newspapermen were close.⁹⁸ In 1936 *The San Bernardino County Sun* reports that Nogueras gave a talk at the Riverside Community Settlement Association. There he discussed “the topic of a closer understanding between the American and foreign press in this country toward promoting better citizenship.”⁹⁹ While the clipping is short and vague it should be viewed within the context of Lopez’s efforts to mobilize citizenship, and their efforts to engage Mexican Americans in the political process.

Amid increased activism, women recognized their ability to instigate change within their communities. As García notes, “While pursuing an activist agenda, Lopez also attempted to reach out to women and a new generation of Mexican American

⁹⁷ “Escuela Mexicana En Cucamonga,” *El Espectador*, December 22, 1938.

⁹⁸ “El Director de ‘El Sol’ de San Bernardino Respalda a Harry R. Sheppard,” November 4, 1938.

⁹⁹ “El Sol Editor Will Give Newspaper Talk,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, December 7, 1936, Newspapers.com.

youth."¹⁰⁰ These women, from across the Inland Empire took the various messages and adapted them to their own context. Through political activism, Mexican American women were able to exercise a power that they did not have as Mexican nationals. In Mexico, women had yet to obtain suffrage. In 1937 there was some hope, but it became clear in 1938 that women's suffrage would again be ignored and put on the backburner.¹⁰¹ American-born Mexican women possessed a power in the United States that they did not have in Mexico, the ability as a citizen to vote in local, state, and national elections.¹⁰²

Conclusion

In the late 1920s and into the 1930s the Mexican and Mexican American communities in Bryn Mawr, Redlands, and the Inland Empire sought to claim local citizenship by asserting residency and belonging within the citrus country town space. While living within the Mexican subdivisions created in the 1910s and 1920s, the community pushed against the racialized separation of space by asserting that they belonged in the space even if their homes were in what was considered "Mexican" Bryn Mawr and that workers were residents of Redlands even if they lived in the North Redlands Mexican neighborhood. By emphasizing their status as rooted members of the larger community they attempted to negotiate access to the resources of the citrus country

¹⁰⁰ García, *A World of Its Own*, 229.

¹⁰¹ "Se Teme Que La Mujer Mexicana No Obtenga El Sufragio," *El Espectador*, August 5, 1938, Cal Polly Pomona.

¹⁰² Historian Linda Gordon noted that there were often tensions between the Mexican men and the women who attempted to become more American. She quotes a Carlos Ibáñez, "the Mexican women who come here also take advantage of the laws and want to be like the American women." Gordon, *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction*, 140.

town despite their racial status. The process of establishing rootedness and residency also forged community and familial ties which allowed communities like Bryn Mawr to thrive and for the residents to rely on each other for support. Support was not simply hyper-local but extended through media connections to the larger regional community of the Inland Empire, which served to bring different Mexican communities into conversation. In the late 1930s and throughout the 1960s, these conversations increasingly turned to the rights of Mexicans and particularly Mexican Americans for equal access to the benefits of the country town. In the next chapter, I assess the ways in which two women, Rafaela Landeros Rey and Fernanda Contreras Cruz, were able to mobilize their local citizenship in their efforts to desegregate the Mexican Bryn Mawr School.

CHAPTER 6: Mobilizing Motherhood:

Gaining Dual Community Membership through White and Mexican Gender Norms

Of a Mexican colony in a neighboring town, some feminine leadership has developed, they say: Look at Mrs. C---. She has done more for the South end there than anyone. Anglos will listen to her when she speaks in the Co-ordinating Council. *A woman like that, who is a good wife and a great mother, can say things to the Anglos our men cannot.*¹

In her 1946 pioneering study of the San Bernardino Mexican American community, anthropologist Ruth Tuck observed that certain women wielded unique power within and outside of their community. Tuck does not unpack why a Mexican woman's positionality as a wife and mother afforded her power within the Co-ordinating Council. After all, the council was a space for white elite men, a space that should, according to intersectional dynamics, be extremely oppressive.² Although Tuck does not explain how or why women felt able to speak up for their communities, her simple observation was the inspiration for my analysis of two women who changed Bryn Mawr for the better, Rafaela Landeros Rey and Fernanda Contreras Cruz. In this chapter, I argue that women, in this case, Rey and Cruz, as Mexican American women were able to mobilize their position as mothers to "fit into" codes of middle-class white femininity. Their status as women, even if they were Mexican, played into white gender norms, which designated women as the "experts" in childrearing and the welfare of their

¹ Emphasis mine. Due to the conventions of her discipline at the time Tuck anonymized the people she studied during her research. She also provided a pseudonym for the city of San Bernardino as well, referring to it in the book as "Descanso." Tuck, *Not with the Fist, Mexican-Americans in a Southwest City*, 1946, 150.

² Mexican mothers were often in an even more precarious position than their white counterparts. "Mexican and Mexican American mothers have long found themselves politically and socially marginalized by their societies because they fall outside of established power dynamics." David Eichert, "Que Vivan Las Mamas: Las Cafeteras, Zapatista Activism, and New Expressions of Chicana Motherhood," in *Music of Motherhood*, ed. M. Joy Rose, Lynda Ross, and Jennifer Hartmann, History, Healing, and Activism (Demeter Press, 2017), 138, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1zgb07s.13>.

community. Rey and Cruz carved out space for themselves and used the respectability they garnered as women, mothers, and caretakers to traverse segregated space, moving between their segregated Mexican neighborhoods into the white citrus country town. In so doing they each asserted their social membership in their everyday lives, which gave them access to local citizenship within both the Mexican and white communities.

In the previous chapters, I traced the contours of the racialized landscape in Southern California at large and, particularly, in Bryn Mawr, California. In so doing, I analyzed how the racialized landscape affected the Mexican American community's access to land, labor, and belonging, all aspects of what I refer to as local citizenship. This chapter traces how the racialized landscape of the citrus country town coalesced with gender conventions, ultimately empowering particular women, in this case, Rey and Cruz, to resist the status quo. Ultimately Rey and Cruz successfully dismantled one of the most visible representations of the racialized landscape, the Bryn Mawr Mexican school, which will be the topic of chapter 7. In this chapter, I illustrate how Rey and Cruz navigated unequal systems of education, labor exploitation, and community suppression in their own lives, and successfully leveraged gender conventions to access both white middle class and Mexican American modes of local citizenship and its antecedent, what Natalia Molina refers to as social membership.³ Rey and Cruz had vastly different life

³ I introduce "social membership," a term used by Natalia Molina, in the previous chapter. Gaining social membership is a precursor to achieving local citizenship. "Social membership is usually equated with citizenship status, but it is important also to investigate how those who were not citizens negotiate a sense of national identity calibrating notions of citizenship and democracy in the process. By shifting the focus to the local level, one can see the ways in which social membership is negotiated every day." Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens?*, 14.

experiences, but in both cases, they were able to gain access to respect, social membership, and ultimately limited local citizenship in Bryn Mawr's country town.

This chapter analyzes Rey and Cruz's life histories through the lens of motherhood and gender. As Gail Bederman proposes in her work *Manliness and Civilization*, I view womanhood as a "historical, ideological process" tied to race in which individuals are culturally constituted as members of a particular gendered group.⁴ As she argues, the ideological construction of gender, while confining, also allows room for individuals to mobilize societal expectations for their benefit.⁵ Careful analysis of gender in the Mexican and Mexican American context has been taken up most recently by Nicole M. Guidotti-Hernández. Her 2021 study of "transnational masculine intimacies" illuminates how masculinity was constructed in the "transnational circuit between Mexico and California," and that it was precisely this movement and circulation

⁴ "This study is based on the premise that gender - whether manhood or womanhood - is a *historical, ideological process*. Through that process, individuals are positioned and position themselves as men or as women. Thus, I don't see manhood as either an intrinsic essence or a collection of traits, attributes, or sex roles. Manhood - or "masculinity," as it is commonly termed today - is a continual, dynamic process.... To define manhood as an ideological process is not to say that it deals only with intellectuals or ideas. It is, rather, to say that manhood or masculinity is the cultural process whereby concrete individuals are constituted as members of a preexisting social category - as men. The ideological process of gender - whether manhood or womanhood - works through a complex political technology, composed of a variety of institutions, ideas, and daily practices. Combined, these processes produce a set of truths about who an individual is and what he or she can do, based upon his or her body." Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*, Women in Culture and Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 7.

⁵ Bederman uses the example of Jack Johnson to illustrate her point, "As Jack Johnson's example suggests, then, gender ideology, although coercive, does not preclude human agency. Numerous ideological strands of gender, class, and race positioned Johnson in a web which he could not entirely escape. He was inescapably a man, a black man, the son of a freed slave brought up in poverty and so on. Yet although these discourse inescapably defined him, Johnson was able to take advantage of the contradictions within and between these ideologies in order to assert himself as a man and a pro-active historical agent." Bederman, 10.

which shaped and reconfigured expressions of masculinity.⁶ In this chapter, I focus on how femininity was leveraged in complicated ways across the segregated “borders” of local space at the intersections of whiteness and Mexican-ness within the citrus country town. Women who moved between and across segregated spaces mobilized their femininity to achieve respectability within and outside their communities. In mobilizing their womanhood, Rey and Cruz successfully cultivated two modes of local citizenship, one within the Mexican subdivisions, and one within the white country town, that transcended racial boundaries. Ultimately, the goal of this chapter is to honor the stories of Rafaela Landeros Rey and Fernanda Contreras Cruz, whose actions have not been recognized, and to call on other scholars to unearth the complicated and even contradictory histories of female grassroots activists.

Historiography

Beginning in the 1970s, a new generation of Chicana scholars began to call out the significant historical erasures of Mexican and Mexican American women.⁷ As Vicki Ruíz famously proclaimed: “As farmworkers, flappers, labor activists, barrio volunteers, civic leaders, and feminists, Mexican women have made history. Their stories, however, have remained in the shadows.”⁸ As both Ruíz and Mary Pardo argue, much of women’s

⁶ Guidotti-Hernández’s analysis of gender construction focuses on movement across boundaries. As she states “Because migrant Mexican men’s intimacies were under scrutiny in both nations, their political identities were shaped by this regulation. In order to understand their experiences more fully, we need a transnational approach to affect and intimacy, one where the movement of ideas, bodies, services, emotions, and goods across and between the borders of nation-states produced new forms of gender.” Nicole M Guidotti-Hernández, *Archiving Mexican Masculinities in Diaspora* (Duke University Press, 2021), 5, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1n1brs6>.

⁷ Alma M. García, “The Development of Chicana Feminist Discourse, 1970-1980,” *Gender and Society* 3, no. 2 (1989): 217–38.

⁸ Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*, xi.

erasure was due to the relative invisibility of women's labor.⁹ Chicana scholars such as Dolores Delgado Bernal, Dionne Espinoza, and later Maylei Blackwell worked to write Chicanas back into the record of the masculinized narrative of the Chicano movement.¹⁰ Bernal reconceptualized the idea of "leadership," and Blackwell utilized what she called "retrofitted memory" to "spin new records" of women's involvement in the Chicano movement.¹¹ These studies significantly advanced insight into Chicana feminism and female activism in the 1960s and 70s, however, the non-Chicana female activism mobilized in the earlier era of Mexican American activism (1930s-1940s), has received less attention.¹²

⁹Pardo attempts to contextualize women's invisibility, arguing that, "Different from electoral politics, grassroots activism happens at the juncture between larger institutional politics and people's daily experiences. Women play a central role in the often unrecorded politics at this level." Ruíz also notes that women's roles in food preparation, mutual aid societies and wildcat strikes, "remained invisible outside the barrio." In her assessment, Mexican American female activism did not permeate white space, remaining hyper-localized within segregated space. However, in the case of Rey and Cruz their actions traversed segregated space. Mary S. Pardo, *Mexican American Women Activists: Identity and Resistance in Two Los Angeles Communities* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 5; Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*, 89.

¹⁰ Dolores Delgado Bernal, "Grassroots Leadership Reconceptualized: Chicana Oral Histories and the 1968 East Los Angeles School Blowouts," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 19, no. 2 (1998): 113–42, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3347162>; Dionne Espinoza, "'Revolutionary Sisters': Women's Solidarity and Collective Identification among Chicana Brown Berets in East Los Angeles, 1967–1970," *Aztlan: A Journal of Chicano Studies* 26, no. 1 (November 1, 2001): 15–58; Maylei Blackwell, *Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement*, 1st ed, Chicana Matters Series (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011).

¹¹ Bernal identifies five dimensions of grassroots leadership, "networking, organizing, developing consciousness, holding an elected or appointed office, and acting as an official or unofficial spokesperson...Not every leader need participate in every dimension of leadership, and I argue that there is no hierarchical order assigned to the different dimensions." Blackwell builds on Bernal's work and utilizes oral histories to re-write the masculinist narrative, "Retrofitted memory is a form of counter-memory that uses fragments of older histories that have been disjunctured by colonial practices of organizing historical knowledge or by masculinist renderings of history that disappear women's political involvement in order to create space for women in historical traditions that erase them." Dolores Delgado Bernal, "Grassroots Leadership Reconceptualized," 123; Blackwell, *Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement*, 2.

¹² Most of the research on women pre-Chicano movement is centered on World War II and its aftermath. Nadine Bermudez, "Mendez et al. v. Westminster School District et al.: Mexican American Female Activism in the Age of de Jure Segregation" (Los Angeles, University of California, Los Angeles, 2015),

Rey and Cruz's activism in the late 1930s and early 1940s is linked with Mexican American middle-class movements like the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the work of newspapermen Ignacio Lopez and Eduardo Noguera, and the growing tide of Mexican American businessmen who gained rights and access through their commercial interests. As scholars have previously noted, Mexican American civil rights movements emerging in the 1930s and into the 1950s relied on claiming access to Americanness and middle-class respectability via political participation and achieving middle-class economic status.¹³ My analysis of Rey and Cruz focuses on the negotiation of gendered politics of respectability. "Respectability Politics," as coined by Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, focused particularly on gender, and how African American women worked to distance themselves from negative stereotypes and conform to purportedly white values such as middle-class white morality and sexual politics.¹⁴ Here I seek to understand how Cruz and Rey utilized the respectability of femininity and motherhood to navigate between the Bryn Mawr Mexican community and the white citrus country town community.

Respectability politics is often framed as an acceptance of white social codes in exchange for social advancement. While this is certainly true, I, like Vicki Ruíz, am

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/1648674868?accountid=14512>; Elizabeth R. Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits: The Lives of Mexican American Women on the World War II Home Front* (Chapel Hill, UNITED STATES: University of North Carolina Press, 2013),

<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucr/detail.action?docID=1120515>; Catherine Sue Ramírez, *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

¹³ García, *A World of Its Own*; Ocegueda, "Sol y Sombra."

¹⁴ Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1993).

interested in the process of negotiation. In her foundational work, *From out of the Shadows*, Ruíz contributes a question, one she herself struggles to answer:

I am intrigued (actually obsessed is a better word) with questions involving decision-making, specifically with regard to acculturation. What have Mexican women chosen to accept or reject? How have the economic, social, and political environments influenced the acceptance or rejection of cultural messages that emanate from the Mexican community, from U.S. popular culture, from Americanization programs, and from a dynamic coalescence of differing and at times oppositional cultural forms?¹⁵

Women, hindered both by racism and the patriarchy, are burdened with certain expectations, instructions, and guidance in how to act. Racial and patriarchal pressures to conform are particularly visible in the context of Americanization. As Ruíz observes, much study has been done on *what* Mexican women were told to do by society, including Americanization teachers, but not what these women chose to do and how they *chose* to conduct themselves.¹⁶ I see Cruz and Rey's stories as processes of careful negotiation of their race, femininity, and motherhood. By analyzing the lives of Fernanda Cruz and Rafaela Rey, I illustrate two different ways that women navigated and utilized conventions of femininity and motherhood for the benefit of themselves, their families, their neighborhood, and other Mexican Americans.

Like other scholars of marginalized women, I define motherhood broadly using the frameworks of othermothers and comadreship.¹⁷ I borrow from Ruíz, Collins, and

¹⁵ Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*, 36.

¹⁶ A similar idea is also seen in Peggy Pascoe's study of Home Missions. While she studies various groups of women who were targeted by the Home Missions including Chinese women, Mormon women, and single women, she attempts to bring the lives of the targets of reform rather than the reformers. "In the social control drama, the subjects of reform are cast in a particular role: they function as victims whose powerlessness is the surest indictment of reformers' control. As a result, they appear as shadowy figures who have little individual agency and few choices about their lives." Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue*, xxi.

¹⁷ Bermudez, "Mendez et al. v. Westminster School District et Al.," 186, 192.

Bermudez who conceptualize other types of mothering. Ruíz traced the importance of women's networks, comprised of actual and fictive kin and particularly what Bermudez calls "comadreship" or "god" parentage which "served as one of the undergirdings for general patterns of reciprocity as women cared for one another as family and neighbors."¹⁸ Being a "godparent" was a form of parentage and feminine caring existing outside of typical biological motherhood. Bermudez, in her study of women activists in Orange County, observes that women justified their involvement due to their comadre duties.¹⁹ Bermudez also cites the work of Black Feminist scholar Patricia Hill Collins, and her term "othermothers," women who protected the community at large.²⁰ In this chapter, I frame mothering as the perceived "feminine" act of caring for children and by extension, community welfare, by women. Both Rey and Cruz embody different types of mothering. Both were mothers to their own children. Rey, through her many family networks, was also a comadre to many in Bryn Mawr, she acted as a community mother in her advocacy to close the segregated school. Cruz as an elementary teacher acted as a mother figure to her students and to the larger population in her support of Rey's mission.

While the segregated landscape of Bryn Mawr created divisions between Mexican and white space, the boundaries, especially in the late 1930s and into the 1940s became

¹⁸ Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*, 16.

¹⁹ "That is to say, the women involved in the Mendez case never identified as activists, feminists, Chicanas, or nationalists, but instead as American, mothers, wives, and comadres." Bermudez, "Mendez et al. v. Westminster School District et Al.," 162.

²⁰ "Community othermothers have made important contributions in building a different type of community in often hostile and political and economic surroundings. Community othermothers' actions demonstrate a clear rejection of separateness and individual interest as the basis of either community organization or individual self-actualization." Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, 2nd ed., Rev. tenth anniversary ed. (New York: Routledge, 2000), 131.

increasingly permeable. In attempting to understand both Rey and Cruz's access to social membership it is important that we also gauge their positionality within white codes of respectability. White women's perceptions of their non-white, and in their eyes, – non-American – peers were rooted firmly in Americanization assumptions.²¹ As briefly discussed in chapter 3 Americanization efforts extended their concern onto the entire family unit, with a particular focus on “reaching” Mexican mothers. Americanization proponents argued that women were culture bearers, if they could be assimilated, the entire family unit would follow.²² Mexican mothers were cited as the linchpin in Americanization efforts. For instance, California Superintendent Will Wood boasted that

California was the first state to recognize the mother as the important factor in the home education, and to give her public school services, whether her child had shown any maladjustment or not.... It is because she is a foreign mother. If her child is doing well in school so much the better. It is still important that she learn English, have contact with American life, and create for the child a home which will not be in conflict with his American education.²³

It was the mother's position as the primary caretaker that garnered the state and nation's intense focus on educating Mexican women.²⁴ In their estimation, the mother could either

²¹ Americanization of mothers was also grounded in gendered politics. As women worked to equate the home with the nation and situate the home as an important part of politics and building political community women exported a specific type of white middle-class motherhood. “Recognition of the reciprocal social obligations of home and political community pushed women's sphere into the political community itself, where some women would receive from other women instructions on home and motherhood.” Gordon, *Women, the State, and Welfare*, 97.

²² “An essential component of an Americanization program, home economics instruction for the Mexican girl commonly began earlier than for American girls because the former tended to drop out of school early. As part of their efforts, Americanization proponents identified the Mexican girls as a potential 'carrier' of American culture, the social gene who upon her marriage and subsequent motherhood could create a type of home in which the next generation could be raised in an American cultural atmosphere.” González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 48.

²³ Will Wood quoted in Mary Cunliffe Trautwein, “A History of the Development of Schools for Foreign Birth Adults in Los Angeles” (Master's Thesis, University of Southern California, 1928), 67.

²⁴ The construction of mothers as the key to democracy meant that womanhood became targeted in early American welfare initiatives. “Motherhood, in this view, held the key to vigor in the citizenry. But the only

be the key source of the problem or its solution and Americanization proponents advocated for the latter. As discussed in chapter 4, white women sought to position themselves as the key professionals in the crusade for Americanization, as a result, Mexican motherhood came under the strict scrutiny of white mothers.

Many scholars have observed how and why Americanization reformers focused on Mexican women, but only Vicki Ruíz has sought to understand how these women negotiated and leveraged Americanization attempts.²⁵ Ruíz uses the term “cultural coalescence” to describe the interaction between immigrants and Americanization programs, arguing that “Immigrants and their children pick, borrow, retain, and create distinctive cultural forms. There is no single hermetic Mexican or Mexican-American culture, but rather permeable cultures rooted in generation, gender, region, class, and personal experience.”²⁶ In attempting to understand the process of “cultural coalescence” she then goes on to provide some intriguing analysis about the ways women utilized the benefits of church-based Americanization programs but largely rejected the church’s religious teachings. I use her framing and apply it to the context of desegregation using the experiences of Rey and then Cruz. Further, I wonder how white women perceived women like Rey and Cruz as they performed certain “desirable” aspects of

way mothers from new races could produce ideal American democrats would be through reform and reward of maternal practice.” Gordon, *Women, the State, and Welfare*, 97.

²⁵ George J. Sanchez, “Go after the Women”: *Americanization and the Mexican Immigrant Woman, 1915-1929*, Working Paper Series, no. 6 (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Center for Chicano Research, Stanford University, 1984); González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*.

²⁶ Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*, 49–50.

Americanization, such as an investment in their children's education, even if their actions encroached upon racial boundaries.

During the transition from the Great Depression to rapid mobilization for World War II, Rafaela Landeros Rey and Fernanda Contreras Cruz banded together to end school segregation in the Mission District, which I cover in chapter 7. To assess their successful efforts, I first trace their lives, how they were raised, what experiences shaped their lives, and as best I can, how they understood their own life's journey. I do so because it illuminates the way that they forged their own unique social membership via approaches to womanhood and motherhood.

Rafaela Rey: Packer, Mutualista, and Community Leader

Rafaela Landeros Rey was born in Bryn Mawr, California, on October 24, 1910, to Daniel F. Landeros and Juana Velarde. She grew up in the Juanita Street neighborhood, the second eldest of 11 siblings. While Bryn Mawr was her home, she did not complete her schooling at the Bryn Mawr Schoolhouse. Rather, she completed her kindergarten through sixth-grade education while living with her uncle in Anaheim, California.²⁷ Orange County has a long history of school segregation, but it is unclear whether Rey attended a segregated school while in Anaheim. She then returned to Bryn

²⁷ In Reynolds, Keld J, *The City of Loma Linda: How It Grew, What It Is*, 1950. He states that Rey graduated from the Bryn Mawr School. In my previous master's Thesis, "*We Have a History, We Have a Name*," I cited that Rey graduated from Bryn Mawr School. However after the recent digitization of the "*I Remember Bryn Mawr*" master tapes additional footage from Rafaela Rey's interview record her explanation of her education. "*I Remember Bryn Mawr*" Tape 3 : Coyazo, Frank : Free Borrow & Streaming : Internet Archive, pt. 13:58-14:24, accessed November 3, 2020, https://archive.org/details/calolphs_000005.

Mawr where she later married Manuel Rey and raised four daughters, Lydia Coyazo, Florence Trujillo, Frances Rivera, and Geraldine Valencia. Throughout her life, she was a proud resident of Bryn Mawr and lived in the house her husband built for their family in 1927. She is fondly remembered by her descendants, including her grandson Frank Coyazo, who lives in her old home.

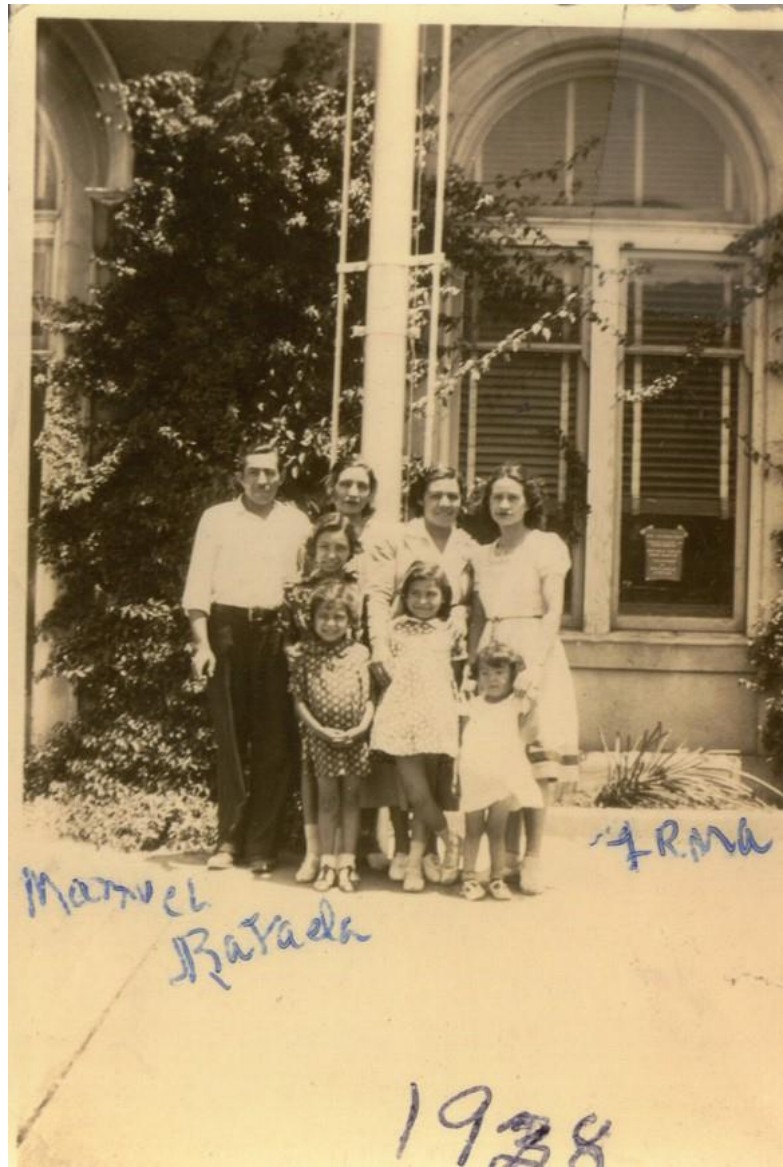


Figure 26: Rafaela, her Husband Manuel and her daughters posing in 1938. (Courtesy Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society, Cooke and Yanez Collection)

In the memories of her descendants, she is affectionately remembered as a grandmother and caretaker. Her sisters and her daughters have since passed away but her grandson's memories paint a loving and nostalgic picture of Rafaela Rey. Frank Coyazo knew her as a surrogate caretaker and as a result, his memories focus on her domestic labor, particularly food preparation, her often strict demeanor, and the many signs of devotion and care she bestowed upon her family. In the many conversations I have had with him, it is clear that he wants her to be remembered for the lengths she would go to provide for her family and, by extension, her community. He often uses the following story, which occurred during his experience working as a young adult in San Diego as a foreman for the Santa Fe Railroad, to illustrate her familial dedication:

I'm standing there and the guys are working and I look over and I see this little car, and I realize that it's my Grandma because she had a little Chevette... and she finally gets there and there is my little cousin Raymond and he is holding a paper bag... inside the bag was tacos and my underwear....and they turned around and left, back to Bryn Mawr...She went all the way from San Clemente, anyone she saw on the railroad working, she would stop and ask where I was.²⁸

For Coyazo, Rey driving 72 miles from Bryn Mawr to San Clemente then driving along the train tracks another 50 miles to San Diego shows multiple facets of her devotion. For Coyazo, it illustrates her desire to return something she thought Frank would need, her thoughtfulness to also pack him homemade food, and her tenacity to follow the railroad in order to find him. Coyazo's story tells us not just facts or details about her life, but crucially, how she has been remembered by those close to her. It is through such specific

²⁸ Ramos et al., Group Bryn Mawr Oral History. Statement given by Frank Coyazo.

memories, as well as the personal documentation Coyazo saved, and I later archived, that we piece together her life and history.

Rafaela Rey worked as an orange packer for Bryn Mawr Food Growers Association for 30 years and then for 17 years as a mechanic for Norton Airforce Base in San Bernardino California. For forty-seven years she labored as a housewife, a citrus packer, and a defense worker. However, what her grandson Frank Coyazo remembers most is Rafaela Rey's work in the kitchen, "I remember grandma making homemade tortillas every morning, and every morning she was making tortillas, early in the morning, you could hear the slapping going on..."²⁹ From his memory, we can start to picture what her days would have been like, waking up perhaps even before dawn to begin her domestic duties, represented in Coyazo's memory as making tortillas. Then she would walk across the busy Barton Road, about a fourth of a mile from her home to the packinghouse to begin another form of labor. Perhaps she would walk and meet up with other fellow packers, women who also had a similar morning routine. They would then enter the packinghouse, and once on the clock, they would be tasked with packing as many oranges as they could into crates, one after another, taking care to properly wrap and place each individual orange. After work she would walk back home again, perhaps attend a mutualista or PTA meeting and continue her domestic labor, cleaning the house and cooking dinner for the family, preparing to repeat the process the next day. It was

²⁹ Ramos et al. Statement given by Frank Coyazo.

through these seemingly mundane actions, which I will contextualize in the following pages, that she built up her position within the community.

Both her domestic and packing labor was crucial to supporting her family. In such a close-knit community comprised of both her literal and fictive kin, family work was viewed as community work. Her status as a packer gave her access to a particular form of female community in which she thrived, becoming a critical part of the Bryn Mawr community structure. Her wage-earning, in combination with her volunteer work, and status as a mother, earned her a position of respect as well as power within the Mexican American community.

Rey's position as an orange packer in Bryn Mawr is a source of pride for Frank Coyazo. During a group interview with Frank Coyazo, Rosalie Coyazo, Fred Ramos, and Arthur "Tudy" Hernandez they all impressed upon me the ubiquity and importance of packinghouse work.

Frank Coyazo: "Grandma was an orange packer, all the ladies around here started as orange packers..."

Tudy Hernandez: "there were four packinghouses here"

Frank: "They were big, we are talking huge!"³⁰

Rafaela Rey and many of the women in the Juanita and 1st Street neighborhoods worked in Bryn Mawr's orange packinghouses. Manuel Rey, Rafaela's husband, remembers that "My wife, my mom used to pack oranges, for the packing house called Bryn Mawr Fruit

³⁰ Ramos et al. Statement given by Frank Coyazo and Tudy Hernandez.

Growers.”³¹ Here Manuel Rey illustrates how generations of women packed oranges to support their families.

Understanding the gendered dynamics of packinghouses is critical to understanding Rafaela Rey’s position within the community. Citrus work in California was typically segregated by gender. In Bryn Mawr, labor segregation was pervasive, women would work in the packinghouses earning piece-rate wages grading, sorting, and packing oranges into crates. In the citrus industry, packinghouse owners justified the gender divide by asserting that women were more dexterous and adept than men at spotting issues with the fruit. Riverside packinghouse owner Steve Solis remarked that “As far as the grading on oranges and grapefruit, it’s better for a woman, they can see the fruit better, see what they’re looking for, injury and different things that are wrong with the fruit.”³² Work in the packinghouse was often considered “light.” Early descriptions of packing in Redlands describe it as only requiring “a clear head and nimble hand.”³³ The reality was that packing work was strenuous, low-paying, and one of the few options available to women who wanted to support themselves and their families.

The packinghouse was simultaneously a space of exploitation and independence. As historian Matt García notes, it was the dual status of “Mexican” and “Woman” that doomed these packinghouse laborers to substandard treatment and pay. He states, “For

³¹ Frank Coyazo, *“I Remember Bryn Mawr” Tape 2*, 1987, pt. 20:52-21:05, http://archive.org/details/calolphs_000004.

³² “Oral History with Steve Solis, Manager of National Orange Company Packing House, Riverside, 1991,” 1991, 20–21.

³³ Redlands Chamber of Commerce to Mrs. Jefferson Griffis, “Information on Packing Work Reply,” July 11, 1906, VII Citrus Collection, C Letters of Inquiry and Reply, A.K. Smiley Public Library Heritage Room Chamber of Commerce Collection.

women, patriarchy within the family and the community constrained their choice of occupations: the dual role of wife and mother (or the expectation thereof) and their perceived status as the secondary wage earner limited their career options and gave employers license to pay women workers substandard wages."³⁴ The intersection of Rey's gender and racial identity was a recipe for elevated discrimination, partially due to systems of precarity built into the labor regime. The women who packed the citrus were paid based upon how many units of citrus they handled in the day; a system often referred to as "piece-rate wages." The faster Rey could pack the more she was paid. Her and her fellow packers' speed was of the utmost importance and was the difference between a living wage and poverty. While we do not have data for pay rates in Bryn Mawr, evidence from other Southern California packinghouses illustrates labor precarity. In 1933, the *Covina Argus* published a story on the relationship between the piece-rate pay and reaching the established minimum wage. At the time, the state of California had recently raised the minimum wage to \$.275 an hour or \$2.20 a day for women and minors. The Covina packinghouses had established workers would earn 5 cents per box and the packinghouses claimed that the average worker would be able to pack over 40 boxes a day and therefore reach the minimum wage.³⁵

Inexperienced employees, the young, the elderly, or the slow-paced would not reach the established minimum wage. To achieve minimum wage, women would need to

³⁴ García, *A World of Its Own*, 161.

³⁵ "New Woman's Wage Scale for Orange Packing," *Covina Argus*, July 21, 1933; Other factors influenced how quickly a woman could pack a crate, including the size of the fruit. "The largest fruit required less time; smaller fruit more time. For example, a 392 took, on average ten to fifteen minutes, while the mid-size orang took only five to ten minutes." González, *Labor and Community*, 1994.

pack a single crate in under ten minutes. Those who could not pack fast enough had a challenging time earning sufficient wages needed to purchase what they needed for themselves and their family. The more efficiently a woman could work, the better it was for her employer, and the better it was for her and her family. One Redlands packinghouse worker, Eunice González, recalls the high stakes in packing:

So, if you didn't make enough boxes you didn't make enough money. There was no set-it was up to the person, because there wasn't a thing that you worked by the hour, 'cause you can go and pack, and say you got tired midday, you can go home, they don't care. Because if you didn't come the next day there'd be somebody waiting because women just liked to do the job.³⁶

The high stakes of packing and the lack of minimum wage security placed these women in a perpetual state of wage precarity and dependence upon the citrus system. Gender-based segregation in the industry also prohibited the vast majority of women from receiving advances to the coveted foreman or managerial positions.

However, the “piece-rate” system did reward those few women, like Rey, who could embody the “ideal” packer image. The ideal packer was speedy, efficient, and neat. They could move astonishing numbers of units daily and be consistent with their work. These women were able to earn wages equal to if not more than their male counterparts. The alluring possibility to earn money, as long as you could remain a competitive worker, did allow for a measure of economic and social independence for these women. As Vicki Ruíz has argued in her analysis of Mexican youth in the 1920s, even the ability to earn depressed wages could significantly aid in a family's combined income and perhaps more

³⁶ Eunice Gonzalez, *Citrus, Labor, and Community in East San Bernardino Valley: An Oral History*, July 8, 1994.

importantly, provide women with some form of autonomy.³⁷ Records of Rafaela Rey's packing wages do not exist. However, her ability to remain employed as a packer for 30 years indicates that her performance continued to meet the high and often unfeasible demands of her employer. As Eunice González, a packer in nearby Redlands, stated in her oral history, the work was extremely competitive and women who could not keep up, often dropped out, but Rey did not.³⁸ In light of these conditions, maintaining a consistent position is a significant feat. As an additional indicator of Rey's relative financial success, it is her name rather than her husband's, recorded in the San Bernardino County Accession Records. Her name in the official records signals that Rafaela was the designated owner of Lots 71b and 72b on Juanita Street, a position often reserved for men.

The benefits of packinghouse work went beyond economic, they were social as well, something Rey took advantage of. On the packing line, female bonds of kinship, friendship, and community could flourish as women chatted, gossiped, exchanged advice, shared recipes, and planned events together. In this female work environment, a community of women, many of them mothers, worked together and forged connections. In his study of citrus "worker villages," González observed that, "packers enjoyed a distinctive social life within the packinghouse. Birthdays, weddings, engagements or other special events could, and often were, celebrated in the packinghouse with potlucks

³⁷ Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*, chap. 3 The Flapper and the Chaperone.

³⁸"They had no set amount for the pickers. If the picker picks three boxes, that's what they get paid for. So in order to get a salary to maintain a family, you would have to pick or pack a tremendous amount of oranges. That was basically one of the reasons why I quit was because I wasn't fast enough." Gonzalez, *Citrus, Labor, and Community in East San Bernardino Valley: An Oral History*, 19.

and parties... Thus a unique camaraderie and interaction distinguished packers from other women in the village.”³⁹ These celebrations were times when the community came together to assert their own belonging and culture within the landscape of white control. As discussed in chapter 5, Mexican and Mexican American efforts to assert their local citizenship through homeownership and labor demands were crucial forms of resistance. Rey’s status as a packer offered an elevated form of social membership, which commanded the respect of the larger community but was primarily based on her femininity and belonging to the gendered occupation of packing.

Rafaela’s occupation was not the only way she engendered the respect of her community. Volunteer work and leadership within Mexican community organizations, called mutualistas, elevated her leadership status. Mutualista organizations or “mutual aid” organizations provided communal financial care to the community. Members paid into a communal fund which was then used to support community members if they fell on hard times. These organizations and the people who ran them provided crucial financial services which were often denied to Mexican and Mexican Americans. Rey was involved in multiple organizations including the Sociedad Progresista Mexicana, Cuerpo Auxiliar de Damas, Sociedad Protectora Femenil, Logias, and Ignacio Zaragoza.⁴⁰

³⁹ González, *Labor and Community*, 1994, 68–69.

⁴⁰ “Rafaela L. Landeros Rey (1910 - 1999) - Find A Grave Memorial,” accessed January 15, 2017, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=56824230>. There were many different mutualista and other Mexican organizations in the United States, in many cases. For more on Mutualistas see Zamora, *The World of the Mexican Worker in Texas*.

Scholars Vicki Ruíz and Emilio Zamora have provided exceptional analyses of mutualista organizations.⁴¹ Both scholars attest to the great importance that these organizations had within local communities and the power that their leaders had within community dynamics. Zamora's description of mutualistas is helpful, "These organizations thus provide an opportunity to study the political culture that defined what was valued and desired in the larger community. Further examination will reveal an encompassing ethic of mutuality and a popular brand of nationalism that guided these organizations."⁴² Mutualistas were built on conceptions of mutual aid and neighborly concern which functioned as a means of supporting themselves when they were systematically excluded from the white community. The work done by members of Mexican American community organizations was crucial in claiming space in segregated neighborhoods and asserting a cultural identity in a white grower-controlled area. The work of community building was a struggle for rights and identity, and the women who instigated community building were integral to the neighborhood's cohesion. Because the work of mutualistas benefited the entire community, their work was highly respected. Rey, as a member of multiple organizations, became a well-known and go-to woman in her community.

Mutualista work was especially tied to a woman's status as a mother and caregiver. Vicki Ruíz details how expansive mutualista work was, as it included "preparing enchilada suppers, organizing jamaicas and dances as well as distributing food

⁴¹ Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*; Zamora, *The World of the Mexican Worker in Texas*.

⁴² Zamora, *The World of the Mexican Worker in Texas*, 85.

baskets...”⁴³ Community event organizing, food preparation, and charity are categorized as women’s work and particularly as an extension of maternalism. As Ruíz observes, “Commenting on women's contributions, the local Spanish-language newspaper *La Prensa* believed that their actions could be attributed to ‘the latent feelings of motherhood carried by all women.’”⁴⁴ As acts of motherhood and maternalism, like those practiced by Rafaela Rey, are naturalized onto women’s bodies their labors become written off as innate and therefore unremarkable, acting as a mother is relegated to instinct rather than a concerted act and choice. Rafaela Rey and others decided to provide for their communities, they chose to take action and they chose to do so in a way that would maintain the community’s respect for them and their work.

Rather than view women’s mutualista labor as simple natural extensions of motherhood, we should instead assess how motherhood was leveraged to achieve a gendered politics of respectability within the Mexican American community. Ruíz argues that “[f]or women, mutualistas represented the spaces between family and community where volunteer work was accepted and respected.”⁴⁵ While women’s mobility was limited, acting and organizing in the service of community was accepted as an appropriate role for women and particularly mothers. Within tight communities, extended family networks, and a landscape of segregation retaining respectability was of paramount importance. Mutualista work allowed for a perfect convergence in which

⁴³ Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*, 87.

⁴⁴ Ruíz, 88.

⁴⁵ Ruíz, 88.

motherhood could be mobilized in a way that aided their community and commanded respect and even authority while maintaining their respectability.

Rey's respectability within her community endures today. Bryn Mawr elder Fred Ramos who grew up in Bryn Mawr in the 1940s recalls that Rey was "one of the leaders in the area. She was forward, she loved people."⁴⁶ His description of her is noteworthy. He assigns her leadership as the primary characteristic, but he also describes her in a way that defies Mexican gendered assumptions as "forward" but his description is subsequently tempered by her motivation, love. Ramos' description condenses the contradictions in Mutualista membership. Mutualista labor was tied to patriarchal ideals of femininity and a mother's love, but it also broke with patriarchal expectations by allowing women to exercise leadership and forwardness. As mothers, Rey and other mutualista women's leadership in matters of community and family were not as easily contested.

Traversing White Space

In the wake of U.S. involvement in World War II, Rey, like many other women on the home front, became an integral part of U.S. military production through military defense work. By literally producing American war materials like munitions, airplanes, and tanks, Mexican American women's labor in integrated facilities resulted in a growing acceptance by the white community. While it has been largely acknowledged that the female workforce expanded dramatically during the War, recently scholars such as

⁴⁶ Ramos et al., Group Bryn Mawr Oral History.

Elizabeth Escobedo have focused particularly on the role of Mexican women on the home front.

Defense work rapidly became a significant employer of women and now women had access to employment beyond orange packing. Government defense work paid better than orange packing but utilized similar gendered labor assumptions, the congruence between the two industries allowed experienced packers like Rey to make the switch with relative ease. Defense work relied on similar conventions to designate “women’s work” on the shop floor. Escobedo observes that” Rosie the Riveter's work - what was once a "man's job" - also often took place in predominantly women-only departments, under sex-typed job classifications that allowed for supposed "female" qualifications of dexterity, attention to detail, ability to tolerate repetition and lack of physical strength.”⁴⁷ Rey was used to working on a production line; for many years she performed fast-paced but extremely precise work readying oranges for production, now she was producing aircraft at Norton Airforce base.

Rey was prepared to transition into defense work on account of her skillset and resiliency against the precarity of gendered labor. Citrus work was often unsteady; freezes, droughts, and other factors could severely cut down the work packinghouses had available. Labor was often halted, postponed, and women let go with no recompense. Experiencing precarity prepared her for the defense industry. Rey worked at the newly opened Norton Airforce Base in San Bernardino, California (1942) and kept many of her

⁴⁷ Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 85.

personal work documents. In her collection, passed down to her grandson Frank Coyazo, there are three documents that notified Rey that she would lose her job due to the “reduction of force.”⁴⁸ Although the defense industry offered forms of stability like health insurance, and higher wages, Rey still contended with the very real possibility of job loss. Despite these warnings, she worked at Norton Airforce Base for 17 years during which time she held various roles including an engine assembler/disassembler, sheet metal worker, metal surface repairer, engine overhaul helper, and later jet engine sub assembler.⁴⁹

Apart from the added pay of defense work, like packing work, the job also brought social benefits. Escobedo observes that Mexican women’s jobs as wartime workers gained them a level of respect, particularly in the wartime workforce, in which segregation was not allowed. Mexican women were working alongside white, Asian, and Black women. The racial ambiguity of Mexican workers often allowed them more access to white respectability than their non-passing counterparts. Escobedo observes that “women of Mexican descent found within the wartime environment an opportunity to be deemed just white enough to be tolerated – and, at times, genuinely accepted -as essential workers and volunteers to the wartime state.”⁵⁰ Rafaela Rey was one of these essential

⁴⁸ A. Johnson to Rafaela L. Rey, “Reduction in Force Notice - March 1954,” March 25, 1954, Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society; R. W. Pohl to Rafaela L. Rey, “Reduction in Force Notice - March 1954,” October 20, 1953, Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society; Fred N. Hendricks to Rafaela L. Rey, “Release from Federal Employment, December 1944,” December 30, 1944, Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society.

⁴⁹ “Notification of Personal Action - Promotion: Rafaela L. Rey from A/C Engine Overhaul Helper to Jet Engine Sub Assembler,” September 2, 1955, Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society; *Federal Merit Promotion Program Form for Rafaela L. Rey*, n.d.

⁵⁰ Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 10.

workers, thus her status as an employee of the U.S. Government provided her additional social status during wartime.

Similar to packing work, being a patriotic laborer leveraged an amount of respectability both within the Mexican community and, critically, in the white community. Escobedo brilliantly lays out how American propaganda calling for hemispherical unity and for the increased labor of women for war purposes led to an increased acceptance of Mexican women. The war heightened paranoia and perceived threats of fascism and foreign insurrection at home, often represented in the media by the activities of the Mexican youth zoot suiter.⁵¹ Mexican mothers were viewed as the solution, that her authority could control the perceived radicality of Mexican youth. Propaganda advocated for “familial stability, racial uplift, and racial unity,” so much so that:

In infusing Mexican motherhood with a purpose that both celebrated, and looked beyond, biological capabilities, the Mexican mother took on a civic role previously reserved for white, middle-class “republican mothers” and “municipal housekeepers.” Good mothers equaled good patriots, and thus Mexican women found themselves uncharacteristically valorized as citizenry invaluable to national unity.⁵²

In the context of wartime foreign threats, Mexican women, particularly mothers, were permitted access to local citizenship as long as they upheld the prescribed patriotic values and morals of “volunteerism and sacrifice.”⁵³ The wartime mobilization of motherhood

⁵¹ White fears regarding Mexican youth intensified and “justified” intense policing within local communities like Redlands and Bryn Mawr. “Gang Threatens Theater Workers - Boys Nabbed by Police One Tried to Hit Officer with Hammer,” *The Redlands Daily Facts*, May 26, 1943; “Zoot Suit Gang Probe Intensified - Boys Taken to Station For Investigation of Rock Throwing,” *The Redlands Daily Facts*, May 25, 1943.

⁵² “Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 61–62.

⁵³ “Even as Progressive reformers included immigrant Mexican women in turn-of-the-century Americanization campaigns, citizenship status remained a burden for Mexican women's eligibility toward

was part of a longer history in which white middle-class women tied motherhood to women's political citizenship; in so doing, women were asked to conform to a particular vision of motherhood to allow for their participation.⁵⁴ Patriotic wartime moral and civic authority, although highly regulated, was a form of power.

Rafaela Rey was Mexican American, she had birthright citizenship, she spoke both Spanish and English, and she had been through the American public school system. While racially categorized as "other" at birth, her place of birth and her family's permanent residence in Bryn Mawr afforded her limited forms of local citizenship.⁵⁵ Americanization proponents aimed to Americanize those they considered alien and Rey had gone through that process. According to reformers, those who went through and

meaningful social protection, including welfare benefits. Yet by the 1940s, federal officials often relied on more inclusive gendered discourses of citizenship as an essential component to the wartime program of racial liberalism. Needing to draw more women of color into the workforce, and hopeful that the wartime environment might encourage the integration of the Mexican population in U.S. society, liberal propagandists at the OWI and OCIAA endorsed positive imagery of wartime work, volunteerism and sacrifice that focused heavily on Mexican women." Escobedo, 46.

⁵⁴ The literature of white women's mobilization of motherhood and femininity to further political aims is vast. I cover some of this in chapter 4. "But by welding motherhood to woman's citizenship, women's politics problematized claims for gender equality. It further compromised the possibility of racial equality when it offered motherhood as the solvent for diversity in America. Arguing for policies tied to gender difference, women's politics interposed women reformers as managers of racial difference. This politics promoted an uplifted universal motherhood, one that would achieve both uplift and universality through the assimilation of Anglo-Saxon norms. Assimilated motherhood was women reformers' weapon against the blows of democracy dealt by poverty and multiculturalism." Linda Gordon, *Women, the State, and Welfare* (Wisconsin, UNITED STATES: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 102, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucr/detail.action?docID=3445267>. For more see: Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States*, Yale Historical Publications (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue*; Ellen Fitzpatrick, *Endless Crusade: Women Social Scientists and Progressive Reform*, 1st Oxford University pbk. ed. (New York, New York ; Oxford University Press, 1990); Nancy A. Hewitt, *Women's Activism and Social Change: Rochester, New York, 1822-1872* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000784853>; Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, *The Gender of Freedom: Fictions of Liberalism and the Literary Public Sphere* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2004).

⁵⁵ Rafaela Rey's birth certificate was shown to me by her grandson Frank Coyazo.

“succeeded” in the process of Americanization could become accepted into American society. However, as many scholars have noted, racial exclusion was often based not on the provided “Americanism” criteria but based on skin color and other physical racial definers. By analyzing the experiences of Rafaela Rey, I seek to understand how the performativity of white femininity and “American” ideals of motherhood could provide Mexican women with access to a lesser type of white citizenship.

An aspect that provided Rafaela Rey with a level of respectability was her participation in her children's education, first as the Bryn Mawr Parent Teacher Association (PTA) president and later as a member of the Mission School PTA. To understand why Rey's role in the PTA held sway within the community, we must understand the context and purpose of the organization. The PTA emerged from the National Congress of Mothers, formed in 1896, and sought to establish local parent's clubs connected to public schools. As California Director of Rural Education Helen Heffernan wrote, the aim of the organization was to elicit “something more than a *passive* interest on the part of the parents. The social and educational forces of the community should be brought together to work for a better curriculum for our youth.”⁵⁶ Integral to the movement was the belief that parents required the guidance of professional teachers, and that “good” parents would be eager to receive and take in professional pedagogical advice.⁵⁷ Administrative advice was often focused on mothering rather than teaching;

⁵⁶ Helen M. Heffernan, “Parents’ and Teachers’ Organizations,” *The Elementary School Teacher* 5, no. 4 (1904): 243. Original italics.

⁵⁷ Douglas R. Powell and Karen E. Diamond, “Approaches to Parent-Teacher Relationships in U.S. Early Childhood Programs During the Twentieth Century,” *The Journal of Education* 177, no. 3 (1995): 73–74.

“childbearing matters, including hygiene, thrift, discipline, and religion were frequent topics of Parent Teacher Association meetings.”⁵⁸ Home and school cooperation was deemed necessary for the successful creation of America’s future citizens, and early PTA efforts focused on Americanization initiatives, particularly in the 1930s. Harold Boedecker claims that “the school must understand fully the home conditions, surroundings, and background out of which each child steps as he enters the portals of the great melting pot, the greatest democratizing, citizen manufacturing institution known in human history, the American free tax-supported Public School.”⁵⁹ The PTA was another method for Americanization, an attempt to teach foreign parents how to bring up their children and to successfully mold “foreign” pupils into the “right” kind of American citizens.

Rey, as the PTA president, indicated her keen interest in her children’s education. While no records of the Bryn Mawr PTA exist, we know from community histories and Rey’s own obituary that she proudly served as PTA president, and as a noon aid once Mission School had been integrated. Although the local paper, the *Redlands Daily Facts*, did not often print news pertaining to Mexican citizens, one small column indicates that there was a robust PTA at Bryn Mawr School. In January of 1942, a tiny advertisement indicated that “to raise funds for their school lunch project for the students the Mexican P.T.A. of Bryn Mawr will sponsor a dance at the Mission school tomorrow evening. Degadillo's orchestra will play for the dance, offering both Latin-American and American

⁵⁸ Powell and Diamond, 75.

⁵⁹ Harold S. Boedecker, “Growth of the Parent-Teacher Movement,” *The Journal of Education* 109, no. 5 (1929): 125.

music.”⁶⁰ This dance shows partial cooperation between the Mexican Bryn Mawr PTA, and the white Mission PTA, as Bryn Mawr sponsored a dance on Mission School grounds. Even if the two PTA organizations were separate, Rafaela Rey’s actions and successes as PTA president were most likely well-received beyond the barrio, as Boedecker notes, “The PTA is a social organization of good repute in the community.”⁶¹

As a PTA member, Rey was acting in a manner that was acceptable to the white community because, at face value, her actions played into Americanization aims. However, in the case of Rey, she was able to leverage a sense of “good repute” as a “properly” engaged mother to become involved in her children’s education in a way that would benefit her daughters and challenge systems of unequal education. PTA involvement was also a statement of presence, as Judith Valles remembers of her mother’s participation in the PTA, “My mother told me that the only thing they know [in reference to the teachers and the parents] is that ‘I am here and that I am your mother.’”⁶² A mother’s presence was a means to communicate her support for her child particularly in a context in which Mexican mothering abilities were questioned and under scrutiny. A mother’s maternal presence allowed them to advocate for her children’s educational needs.

Rafaela Rey’s status within her own community as a mother, packer, and mutualista when combined with her active participation in her children’s education, and

⁶⁰ “Bryn Mawr P.T.A. To Sponsor Dance,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 29, 1942.

⁶¹ Harold S. Boedecker, “Growth of the Parent-Teacher Movement,” 128.

⁶² Ocegueda, “Sol y Sombra,” 102.

her newfound wartime respectability, extended her influence outside the barrio. She gained respectability in the Mexican community, but also the white citrus country town community. Rey's status as PTA president, as a mother playing by the "rules" of Americanization, provided her with a power and moral progressivist appeal when she presented her concerns, along with the concerns of a fellow teacher to the school board in 1942.

Fernanda Cruz: Becoming the Exception

Next, we turn to the life of Fernanda Contreras Cruz.⁶³ Fernanda Cruz was one of the few Mexican American women to earn a teaching credential from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1937.⁶⁴ She saw herself as a pioneer, as did her family and friends. Even the local newspaper and the San Bernardino County Museum covered her life story. There exists an array of rich sources about her life, including a family oral history, an oral history conducted by the San Bernardino County Museum, her autobiography, and her master's thesis. Through these sources, we can see how Cruz crafted a careful narrative about her life. Within these records, she focuses on particular

⁶³ Other education scholars have noted the importance of biography in the study of education. "For me, educational biography served a purpose. In my own philosophical bias as a critical pragmatist, I see biography as a means to an end and then to further ends. Through studying the lives of educators, we can get a glimpse into the social microcosm of the classroom. We can learn about human relations, gender, class, ethnicity, resistance and curriculum" Sam F. Stack, *Elsie Ripley Clapp (1879-1965): Her Life and the Community School*, *History of Schools & Schooling*, 1089-0678 ;v. 42 (New York: P. Lang, 2004), 5, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/004911793>.

⁶⁴ González highlights Mexican American teachers in Orange County noting that "The two were indeed privileged and rarities. They were considered by the dominant community to be examples of the "different" Mexican, not to be confused with the uncultured laborer, his family, and neighbors." While Cruz's experiences are unique, she is part of a rising group of Mexican American educators. González, *Labor and Community*, 1994, 107.

stories which allow her to draw a through-line between her experiences in a segregated school and the educational philosophies she developed later in life.

In many ways, Cruz conceives of her own life as one of exceptionalism, with education being the key to her exceptionalism. In particular, she viewed her love for reading and learning as something that set her apart from others and laid the groundwork for her success. Other scholars have noted the fluidity of racial boundaries, usually along the color line and class lines. As Nájera states, “Indeed, class, complexion, education, and social connections affected the ways that Mexicans experienced segregation. Nevertheless, even an alignment of all those factors did not guarantee acceptance into Anglo spheres.”⁶⁵ To many white teachers and educators, Cruz embodied the successes of Americanization. Cruz’s life history tells a particular story of exceptionalism while also indicating how her status as an “exceptional Mexican” could be used as a means of resistance. As a professional educator, Cruz had wider access to white space and white middle-class respectability than most Mexican Americans.

Fernanda Contreras was born on March 23, 1914, in Lerdo, Mexico, though she had no memory of living in Mexico. Both of her parents were orphans, and her father taught himself how to read and write. In 1918, Fernanda Cruz’s family came to the United States to live with her mother’s sister. Her family settled in Azusa, California where her aunt and uncle were already living. Like the majority of Mexican immigrants at the time, they lived in a segregated Mexican neighborhood. In her autobiography, Cruz

⁶⁵ Nájera, *The Borderlands of Race*, 30.

describes it as “a typical Mexican section --bo [sic] sidewalks--no lawns--and a beer parlor at each corner of the streets. Today there are sidewalks--a few lawns--but the beer parlors still stand.”⁶⁶ Her memories recall a “horrid” external environment that was dangerous to the residents and particularly the children who lived there. Whereas many other oral histories of Southern California barrios recall these spaces fondly, Cruz displays a repulsion to them. However, fond and joyous memories come from her familial connections within the home, which she understands as central to her life. While she may have lived in a “typical” Mexican space, she views her family, especially her parents as being exceptionally good-tempered, sober, and supportive. Perhaps even without knowing, she subscribes to aspects of citrus country town morality. She understands their moral fortitude as the main “force” that allowed her to succeed, despite her circumstances.⁶⁷

Cruz’s early educational experiences are central in her understanding of her life as an evolution in education, beginning with the trauma of segregated schooling. At her school in Azusa, she was taught in the Mexican schoolroom apart from the white children who were instructed on the other side of the building. Cruz vividly remembers her experiences in kindergarten through second grade in which “I spent my kindergarten days putting pegs into boards. I spent my first-grade days in the corner, with my head down on

⁶⁶ Fernanda Cruz, *All About Me: Autobiography of Nanda Cruz*, 1964, 6.

⁶⁷ “It is a horrid environment in which to bring up children. Outside--dirt and noise. Inside our little shack of a house--with just the essentials in furniture but--but within that home--the force which I feel did a tremendous job in overcoming many of the possible effects of that environment on all of --our parents! Not once as long as I can remember did I ever see or hear my parents quarrel.” Fernanda Cruz, 6. Underline original.

the desk, or in the closet. The sounds [English spoken by her teacher] still meant nothing and I was miserable.”⁶⁸ Her experience indicates the type of educational environment provided to Mexican students, a lack of real language training, and a focus on menial tasks. Her descriptions also align with the pedagogical practices of individual education in which the students are viewed as solely responsible for their failures and are not provided with significant guidance in language instruction. Her descriptions bring to light the traumatic and isolating experiences of Americanization pedagogy.

At least in her memories, Cruz indicates that as a child she felt anxious about her academic performance. She laments, “How could I have room to feel anything when I was filled with the anguish of how terrible I was at school?”⁶⁹ We can see from her description that as a very young child Cruz internalized the message of individual education. Even as an adult, in her memory her poor performance stemmed only from her abilities. It was she who was in error, who could not learn, who was unable to reach the standards of the teacher. Rather than becoming disillusioned with school, Cruz sought to appease her teachers by demonstrating academic prowess and thereby disproving racialized expectations about her intellectual ability. At the beginning of Cruz’s schooling, the individual education pedagogy was a curse; however, beginning at the age of eight she was able to leverage the underlying assumptions within the individual education system and gain the sympathy of her teachers as well as female philanthropists.

⁶⁸ Fernanda Cruz, 3.

⁶⁹ Fernanda Cruz, 3.

Cruz conceptualizes her third-grade year, the year she learned to read in English, as the turning point in her life. She views this year as transformational, during which time she was no longer a confused child, but an engaged student. At the age of eight she “knocked myself out trying to conform.”⁷⁰ In her eagerness to impress her teachers, to be seen as a capable student she turned to books. Her insatiable love for the “magic” of reading became her primary focus. Cruz read book after book, reading “almost all the books in the children’s section of our town’s library.”⁷¹ Her voracious reading had transformed her from a failure within the individual education system to one of the rare Mexican “exceptions.” As Jennifer Nájera observes in her study of La Fiera, Texas: “Exceptional Mexican people were usually of higher socioeconomic status, had the ability to speak English, possessed a kind of Anglo cultural fluency, and were often light-skinned. Very rarely, however, were these exceptional Mexican people allowed full access to Anglo society.”⁷² In the case of Cruz, her social membership was achieved through educational prowess, which later allowed her access to white space. In her oral histories and autobiography, she defines herself by her love of reading, perhaps due to the fact that in her teachers’ eyes her desire to read and to learn defined her as an “exception” within her race.

⁷⁰ Fernanda Cruz, 4.

⁷¹ Fernanda Cruz, 7.

⁷² Nájera, *The Borderlands of Race*, 3.

Cruz was viewed as an exception outside of school as well. Cruz describes September 16, 1922, as one of the important events in her life because as an eight-year-old she publicly recited a long poem during the Mexican Independence Day festivities.



Figure 27: Cruz and others participating in September 16th festivities in Azusa. (Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society, Richard Cruz Collection)

It was during her public speaking performance that she won the affections of the celebrating Mexican community, but also of a white women philanthropist. She fondly recalls,

in the audience was an American lady, Mrs. Mabel Louis Chilberg who was a great humanitarian and spent a great deal of time and money helping the Mexican people of Azusa. That evening she took a fancy to me. Next day she sent me a new dress! She came to my house to talk to me. I do not remember what she said, but she bought me my first ice cream soda.⁷³

Cruz called Chilberg and other Azusa philanthropists the “Patron Saints of Azusa.”⁷⁴

They supplemented her substandard public education, providing her with a specific type of education that would allow her access to white space and supply her family with aid and support. As an “exceptional Mexican” and as Chilberg’s companion, she would be immersed in more direct methods of Americanization. As a self-appointed philanthropist Chilberg visited homes in the Mexican community and Cruz was her interpreter.⁷⁵ As Chilberg’s interpreter, she participated in soft Americanization practices as a child.⁷⁶ Chilberg’s attention affected Cruz’s family as well. Fernanda Cruz’s father had a steady income as a rock crusher, but when he was injured, he was offered a position at Chilberg’s ranch. Chilberg’s affection for Cruz compelled her to support her family by giving her father a job, but his newfound employment did not result in security. Cruz notes that at the ranch, “Sometimes it was slow and he was laid off--pay was not very

⁷³ Fernanda Cruz, *All About Me: Autobiography of Nanda Cruz*, 4.

⁷⁴ San Bernardino County Museum, *Fernanda Cruz: A Lifelong Love of Learning*, DVD, Bright, Quick, and Ready County Schools 1870s to 1920s, n.d.

⁷⁵ “I became her interpreter as she made home calls.” Fernanda Cruz, *All About Me: Autobiography of Nanda Cruz*, 5.

⁷⁶ Fernanda Cruz, 5.

high—"77 While Chilberg was eager to help Fernanda Cruz, the help she gave to her family only went so far and still exploited Cruz's father's labor.

Crucially, Cruz was educated in aspects of white femininity. Chilberg acted as a white "mother" imparting the knowledge of white middle-class femininity. Cruz's education in white middle-class cultural mores aided her later in life as she sought to cross the color line. Cruz remembers that "She [Chilberg] took me to her home on weekends, talked to me about such things as cleaning my nails in public, being clean, writing thank you notes and so on."⁷⁸ While these lessons were not "educational" in the traditional sense, Chilberg's white feminine knowledge of etiquette and manners gave Cruz a distinct advantage in appealing to the white community. Chilberg's lessons taught Cruz the largely unspoken codes and symbols of white middle-class femininity, that she would have been unable to access otherwise.

As with other forms of learning, Cruz soaked it up. Chilberg was so impressed with Cruz that she asked her family for permission to adopt her. While Cruz's parents allowed for day trips and even for Cruz to stay at Chilberg's home in Laguna during the summer, "Needless to say, they would not hear of it; and I would not go, but all of us felt very flattered just the same."⁷⁹ Cruz does not provide any reasoning for Chilberg's desire to adopt her, but it does draw significant connections to the politics of race, adoption, and proper mothering as brilliantly described by Linda Gordon in *The Great Arizona Orphan*

⁷⁷ Fernanda Cruz, 5.

⁷⁸ Fernanda Cruz, 7.

⁷⁹ Fernanda Cruz, 8.

*Abduction.*⁸⁰ Chilberg assumed that Fernanda Cruz as the “exceptional Mexican” should be removed from her, presumably unexceptional, family. Whether or not Chilberg believed that Cruz’s family could not properly care for her, Chilberg obviously saw herself as a superior parent, as someone who could more thoroughly provide for and educate Cruz. Replacing herself as Cruz’s mother would have provided Cruz with even more access to whiteness. After her offer to adopt Cruz was declined, Chilberg continued to support Cruz and educate her at her home, until she died while Cruz was attending college. Cruz was deemed an exception and as a result, she received advanced Americanization knowledge, practices of white femininity, and obtained access to educational resources, including Chilberg’s large library, and later UCLA’s educational resources.

Perhaps because of her partial access to white space, as a child, Cruz was keenly aware of the racial discrimination she faced. With her increased knowledge came an awareness of the severe injustices the Mexican students faced. She states, “I became aware that we, as Mexicans, were segregated from the Anglo children. I resented it tremendously.”⁸¹ Her awareness of segregation and her own second-class status meant that she did not fully identify with her white supporters like Chilberg. Rather than become sullen or resigned over the discrimination she faced, Cruz utilized segregation as a motivating factor for her success which only increased her “zealous interest in my school work.”⁸² In many ways her attitude served her well, the more she excelled the

⁸⁰ Gordon, *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction*.

⁸¹ Fernanda Cruz, *All About Me: Autobiography of Nanda Cruz*, 8.

⁸² Fernanda Cruz, 7.

more she was able to cross over the color divide. She was given the lead in the school play, and after she observed that the student body meetings were integrated, she became secretary. Education became her key to access white space. Cruz ultimately became the valedictorian in her eighth year allowing her access to a high school education, which was extremely rare at the time.⁸³ She fondly remembers the experience of going to an integrated school: “I was accepted as a person – not as a Mexican only.”⁸⁴ Her experiences with Mrs. Chilberg, her comparatively light skin, her ability to personally excel, allowed her race to fade into the background, and she saw a future for herself in education.

After high school, she pursued studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. To help pay for her education, her older brother ended his own schooling in order to buy her books. She recounted her brother’s sacrifice in every recorded recounting of her life’s story, often claiming that he was smarter than her, she was just good at reading books. Apart from these economic burdens, the restrictions on Mexican women imposed by the community were difficult to combat.⁸⁵ Cruz’s trips to La Jolla and Doheny with Chilberg as well as her participation in various school clubs earned her suspicion.

⁸³ González mentions the graduation of Isabel Martínez from Fullerton High School in 1931 which was cited at least by the *Placentia Courier* as “the first student of Mexican parentage who has graduated from the high school.” González, *Labor and Community*, 1994, 111.

⁸⁴ Fernanda Cruz, *All About Me: Autobiography of Nanda Cruz*, 9.

⁸⁵ Girls were often sequestered and heavily protected by their families until marriage. For more see chapter 3 “The Flapper and the Chaperone” in Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*.



Figure 28: Various photos of a young Cruz growing up in Azusa.
(Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society, Richard Cruz Collection)

Richard Cruz remembers his mother's words. "I know my parents got criticism from the community the other people, women from the community saying, 'you can't let your daughter do this, you don't know what she is doing, if she is going out with men.'"⁸⁶ Despite these criticisms, Cruz continued her pursuit of education. At one point a man asked for her hand in marriage, but she declined his offer to follow her dreams of becoming a teacher.⁸⁷ While at UCLA, she struggled to support herself and attend classes. Her son Richard Cruz remembers her stories about how "She only had three or four dresses that she would have to wash and keep clean."⁸⁸ As a result of these financial hardships, she left after her first semester to work at the Padua Hills Theater before returning to finish her degree.⁸⁹ These oft-repeated stories of economic and familial hardship told in her autobiography and oral histories were meant to convey to her audience that while she, and especially her family, struggled to help her on her path towards education, she succeeded despite these obstacles.

Her first teaching job was in the San Bernardino County School District at Guasti, an unincorporated town east of Ontario. Guasti was a rural district and during her time there she taught both Mexican and Italian students whose families worked in the

⁸⁶ I like to use the interviews of family and descendants because it gives insight into the stories that were passed down to the family. Rick Cruz in his interview retells the stories that his mother told over and over again, the canonical stories which were central in how she understood her own life story. Rick Cruz, Interview regarding Fernanda Cruz, interview by Audrey Maier, November 10, 2017, Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society.

⁸⁷ San Bernardino County Museum, *Fernanda Cruz: A Lifelong Love of Learning*.

⁸⁸ Cruz, Interview regarding Fernanda Cruz.

⁸⁹ García interviewed Fernanda Cruz for his chapter "Just Put on that Pauda Hills Smile" as he states, "The Padua Hills Theater in Claremont featured Mexican-theme folk plays, romantic comedies, and historical dramas performed by young local Mexican Americans...the Mexican Players (or Paduranos as the performers called themselves), became one of the most celebrated collection of Mexican American artist in Southern California from 1931 to 1974." García, *A World of Its Own*, 123.

vineyards. In 1938, these students were instructed in a substandard learning environment. Cruz declares “They didn't have a school, so they taught in little makeshift wooden things, it was hotter than the dickens. Oh, I loved it. I thought in that year I was going to reform the whole human race!”⁹⁰



Figure 29: Cruz with her class at Guasti, 1938.
(Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society Digital Archive,
Richard Cruz Collection)

Cruz’s optimism in the face of such bleak circumstances and her passion for teaching is clearly evident. Within her statement is an interesting assumption, that she, as an exception, had the ability to uplift those students who were denied the opportunity, and

⁹⁰ San Bernardino County Museum, *Fernanda Cruz: A Lifelong Love of Learning*, DVD, Bright, Quick, and Ready County Schools 1870s to 1920s, n.d.

by extension “the whole human race.” She maintained her belief in the transformative potential in education throughout her teaching career. She closely worked with the community, and what she learned during her 3 years there would serve her well in her next assignment. For her, it was the joy of teaching that enlivened and inspired her, particularly, the joy of teaching children like her who were denied a proper education because of their race and ethnicity.

In 1940, Cruz moved to Redlands, California to teach at the segregated Bryn Mawr School. There she found herself teaching in a segregated school comprised solely of Mexican pupils. Cruz remembers that at the Bryn Mawr School, “There were two classrooms, one for students in kindergarten through second grade. The second classroom was for students in grades three through six.”⁹¹ By 1940, Bryn Mawr School was sending its upper-grade students to Mission School, but kindergarten through third grade was still segregated and taught completely by Cruz. She also was in charge of teaching the adult night school.⁹² Cruz was an asset to the community because she inhabited contradictory spaces. She was, at least formally, in the authority position to impose Americanization, however, her own negative experiences with segregated schooling informed her approach. She sought to teach in order to help and empower. As a teacher, she served as a surrogate mother, working to help uplift her students despite the discrimination they

⁹¹ Julie Farren, “Landmark Building May Be Relocated,” *The San Bernardino Sun*, February 22, 1996, sec. Local History, Newspapers.com.

⁹² “In the spring of 1940, I was invited to teach in the Mission School District at their Bryn Mawr School. I moved to Redlands. During the summer I went to U.C.L.A. to obtain an Adult Education Credential because one of my responsibilities at Bryn Mawr was to teach night school. It was while I was at Bryn Mawr that I had my first student teacher from the University of Redlands.” Fernanda Cruz, *All About Me: Autobiography of Nanda Cruz*, 14.

faced. For her, education had the power to break down racial barriers. Unlike white teachers, who assumed Mexican deficiency and used the segregated school to disempower their students, Cruz saw education as a powerful means of empowerment. She held on to the idealistic belief that education had changed her own life so she saw the same possibilities in her own students.

It was during her time teaching in Bryn Mawr that she forged a strong bond with the Mexican community. Her ability to speak with the community in Spanish and her position as a Mexican immigrant granted her larger access to the community. Unlike previous white teachers, she was welcomed into the homes of her students. She recalled, “and of course we had a lot of Spanish speaking people, so the parents would say, oh Mrs. Cruz can you come and have lunch with us or something, and I never said no because they're good cooks!”⁹³ In addition to individual visits, the Bryn Mawr community threw Cruz a large bridal shower upon her engagement to Phillip Cruz. The entire community came out to celebrate the occasion indicating there was a strong connection between the tight-knit community and the new teacher.⁹⁴

In 1942 she married Phillip Cruz, a carpenter who later built their house on Monterey Street in Redlands. Her income afforded them a middle-class lifestyle, putting her in a different class than the residents of Bryn Mawr. Their income, as well as her professional job, allowed the family to cross racial boundaries. Monterey Street was in a

⁹³ San Bernardino County Museum, *Fernanda Cruz: A Lifelong Love of Learning*.

⁹⁴ Ramos, Unrecorded Interview. In multiple conversations with different community members there were no remembrances of similar events held for the other schoolteachers in Bryn Mawr.

wealthier white neighborhood in Redlands, a far cry from the “horrid” neighborhood she experienced as a child. The family was able to settle there because the price was reduced due to the undesirability of the plot; the land they purchased had a large hole in the ground, which Phillip Cruz turned into a basement.⁹⁵ Their new home on the white side of town allowed their three children to attend Smiley Elementary School, a primarily white school in the Redlands School District, as well as Redlands High School. As a result of her stable income, comparatively light skin, and their south Redlands residence, her son Richard Cruz does not remember racial tensions at school: “Me living here in Redlands, being Mexican, I was more inculturalized [sic], uh, what do I call it? White, rather than Mexican.”⁹⁶ Cruz’s ability to protect her children from institutional racism also resulted in her decision not to teach her children the Spanish language. As a student who experienced the trauma of Americanization and segregation and as a teacher who was aware of the prevailing notions of white educators about the Spanish language, she made a calculated decision that was meant to help her children.

While Cruz does embody the “exceptional Mexican” archetype, unlike the subjects studied by Nájera, Cruz maintained a careful understanding of the limits of her exceptionalism against racial boundaries. While she often lauded the people who knew and believed in her accomplishments like Mrs. Chilberg and later district and mentors like San Bernardino County Superintendent Thrall, she often recounted stories of blind racism and discrimination, which she experienced when people could not read her

⁹⁵ Cruz, Interview regarding Fernanda Cruz.

⁹⁶ Cruz.

exceptionalism on her skin. She recalls that “Before I came to the County Schools Office, I applied for a position in the San Gabriel Schools. The man who interviewed me said he could not possibly hire me to teach because of my accent. I felt he was really afraid to hire me because I was a Mexican.”⁹⁷ She understands his racism as fear-based. However, she does not contextualize his fear, it could be fear of white community retaliation, fear of racial contamination, or fear of the unknown: fear of hiring someone outside of his group who does not share the same moral codes. Her experiences with Americanization, her knowledge of white female mores were not legible to him, therefore her exceptionalism was invisible. However, for those who could (and would) read her exceptionalism, she used it to her advantage, to gain access to white spaces and as she had for Mrs. Chilberg, act as an interpreter and advocate for the needs of the Mexican community. Her professional status, her cultural background, her knowledge of white femininity, and her concern for students were relatively accepted by those who had the power to desegregate.

Dual Community Membership

Rey and Cruz both occupied the “middle ground” within the community by having, albeit limited, respectability in both the Mexican and white communities. They held differing types of social membership, which traversed segregated space. For Rey, her positionality as a mother fit into both Mexican and white codes of respectability, her status as a packinghouse worker and mutualista made her a leader in the Mexican

⁹⁷ Fernanda Cruz, *All About Me: Autobiography of Nanda Cruz*, 13.

community, while her position in the PTA and her position at Norton Air Force Base fits into codes of proper “American” womanhood and motherhood. Cruz’s own experiences with segregation and her support of the Mexican children and adults she taught made her a respected figure in Bryn Mawr; however, her status as an exceptional Mexican, as a middle-class professional who had experience operating in white spaces, provided her with elevated levels of respectability, but also access. Cruz and Rey’s ability to operate within both Mexican and white codes of femininity and motherhood gave them a unique voice and the empowerment to “say things to the Anglos our men cannot.”⁹⁸

At the core of this chapter are the lived experiences of various community members, which in many ways do not fit into existing trends in the literature. In my experience with oral history and public history, these discrepancies exist because the scholarship has yet to listen to their stories. I argue that the experiences of Cruz and Rey are not the exception to the “rule,” but rather that by honoring their stories we will make space for similar lives and experiences. To do so I focus not only on their actions, but on these women’s lives, families, and connections. As Elizabeth Escobedo notes in her study of Mexican American women’s lives during World War II, “Often overlooked in these institutional perspectives is an understanding of the changing social and personal consciousness of the average, rank-and-file Mexican American woman as she negotiated new experiences and new encounters brought on by extraordinary circumstances.”⁹⁹ In the story of the Bryn Mawr School, the actual event of school desegregation was in many

⁹⁸ Tuck, *Not with the Fist, Mexican-Americans in a Southwest City*, 1946, 150.

⁹⁹ Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 3.

ways anti-climactic. What is far more interesting than the “event,” are the ways in which Rey and Cruz negotiated the gendered and racialized landscape of the Mission School District.

When Rey addressed the school board in 1942 to call for the complete closure of the Bryn Mawr School and the end to segregation in the district, she encountered entrenched systems of white power. While she was able to speak and state her mind due to her membership, she was unable to change the board’s stance without reorienting the power structure. She and Cruz’s femininity allowed them limited access to local seats of power but they needed more to achieve their goal of complete desegregation. In the next chapter, I detail the fraught desegregation and integration process.

CHAPTER 7: Closing Bryn Mawr School:

Rafaela Rey and Fernanda Cruz's Grassroots Desegregation Campaign and its Aftermath

In a 1978 newspaper article recollecting Bryn Mawr's past, journalist Floyd Rinehart interviewed Carlos Ramirez about his life in Bryn Mawr and experiences at the Bryn Mawr Mexican School.

Ramirez, who attended the old school in the mid-1930s, said there were two teachers and as many classrooms. "There was a room for kids in kindergarten through second grade and a classroom for pupils in third through sixth grades," Ramirez said. He recalls, too, there was no play equipment. "We had a ball field and girls, and boys were kept separated during recess," Ramirez said. He was shifted in 1938 to the new Mission School, which was kindergarten through eighth grade. Ramirez continued education at Redlands High School and went into the military service during World War II. Upon his return to Bryn Mawr in 1945, Ramirez was married in the former schoolhouse, by then used as a church.¹

Carlos Ramirez's experience spans the tumultuous years between 1938 and 1945 in which the thirty-year history of school segregation in Bryn Mawr ended. In less than a decade, the schoolhouse, a place of segregation and oppression, was transformed into the community's church, a place of worship and celebration. The desegregation of Bryn Mawr School and the subsequent integration of Mission School was brought about by two women, Rafaela Landeros Rey and Fernanda Contreras Cruz.

As I have traced the Inland Empire's particular rural racialized landscape, I have focused on particular spaces, including the fairground, Mexican subdivision, and the schoolhouse. In chapters 3 and 4, I focused specifically on rural education policy and paid particular attention to education policymakers and teachers, analyzing how they

¹ Floyd Rinehart, "Old Bryn Mawr Not as Busy as It Used to Be," *The San Bernardino Sun*, December 17, 1978, sec. Section C, Newspapers.com.

perceived rural educational space and developed “solutions” to the issues of foreign rurality including segregated schooling and Benevolent Americanization. This chapter situates the Bryn Mawr School within the context of the Mexican community and their multifaceted resistance to the country town social system and white supremacy, as displayed through the community’s effort to desegregate Bryn Mawr School.

In this chapter, I investigate the erasures of Mexican and Mexican American women in battles to desegregate California public schools outside of the courts. By tracing processes of desegregation, integration, and the reclaiming of space in Bryn Mawr this chapter illuminates alternative practices of desegregation and community activism which have received little attention. I trace the grassroots movement to desegregate the Bryn Mawr School, led by Rafaela Landeros Rey. Rey petitioned the school board and successfully elected a non-segregationist to the Mission District school board, the body which controlled educational decisions in the school district. Analyzing the process of petition and election rather than litigation illuminates the web of local politics and racialized structures that upheld segregation. Bernal’s alternative five dimensions of women’s leadership in the Chicano movement is a crucial tool in looking beyond litigation. Her list includes, “networking, organizing, developing consciousness, holding an elected or appointed office, and acting as an official or unofficial spokesperson.”² Rey, within her position as a respectable mother led the desegregation effort through networking, both within and outside the Mexican Bryn Mawr community, and she

² Dolores Delgado Bernal, “Grassroots Leadership Reconceptualized,” 123.

became the spokesperson for the community's children. It was her consciousness raising that ensured a non-segregationist was able to cast the deciding vote to end segregation in Bryn Mawr.

Rather than conclude the study with the official desegregation of the district, I continue the story, focusing on the ways that teacher Fernanda Cruz, helped students navigate the fraught integration process. Cruz acted as a leader during integration using her official role as a teacher to act as a spokesperson for the newly integrated Mexican children to other teachers and the administration. In this chapter, I frame desegregation and integration interrelated processes of resistance. At the heart of this chapter is the call for scholars to look beyond litigated desegregation cases. Widening our focus to those women who spoke up for their communities, who actively fostered networks, and raised consciousness during the fight for desegregation, brings to light unrecognized activists, and alternative methods of resistance thereby complicating existing desegregation narratives.

Rey began her crusade against segregation in early 1942. To understand how and why she was successful, I first unpack the early history of the Bryn Mawr School and changes to the Mission School District occurring in the 1930s. I then discuss the particular context of the early 1940s and how students' labor was understood in the early years of U.S. involvement in World War II. In this section, I trace the relationships between labor and education in the Mission District. I then piece together the desegregation process occurring between 1942 and 1943, bringing to light an uneasy

coalition between Mexican American activist Rafaela Rey and her white ally, Ruth T. Davis. Finally, I investigate the process of integration led by Fernanda Cruz in the Mission District, honoring the difficulties Mexican American students faced during integration, and, in conclusion, I show how the schoolhouse was reclaimed as an empowering religious space for the community.

Multiple Levels of Erasure Coalesce

Before telling the story of desegregation in Bryn Mawr, it is important to acknowledge the layered erasures that have obscured histories of desegregation. The conditions for erasure were laid at the local level, within the archive, and within the larger historiographical trends which privilege a litigative and male lens. Firstly, local history accounts of Bryn Mawr have promoted a singular view of the history of the region, which emphasizes the glory days of citrus work and serves to perpetuate the fantasy utopia as outlined in chapter 1. No peer-reviewed books or articles have discussed the history of the Bryn Mawr School. Instead, the documentation of the Bryn Mawr School lies in publications by local historical societies, newspapers, and oral histories. Many of the accounts of the school published in newspapers and by historical societies reproduce nostalgia of a citrus utopia. A telling example is local historian Peggy Christian's 2002 account of the Bryn Mawr School, she states that "a charming old country school was built around the turn of the century, housing mostly Hispanic children. The Anglo children went to school on Mission Road, across from the Van

Leuven home.”³ Her brief mention does not situate the politics and landscape of segregation in the area nor provide details about the experience of segregation. Further, by describing the school as “charming,” Christian romanticizes the realities of systematic oppression and white supremacy. The schoolhouse becomes a pastoral symbol of placid country life, reifying citrus boosterism. After this one line, she switches focus, discussing only the education of white children. A second local history source, Keld Reynolds’s book *Sunshine, Citrus, and Science: The Loma Linda Community Story*, spends only 2 pages discussing the entire history of Bryn Mawr.⁴ In one sentence, the author mentions that Rafaela Rey was instrumental in desegregation, but he fails to provide any further details or footnotes.⁵ More recent coverage of the Mission District and Bryn Mawr School published in the 2000s deal more explicitly with the issue of race and segregation.⁶

The second issue in studying the desegregation of the Bryn Mawr School is the severe lack of archival documentation. Almost all the records for the Mission School District disappeared after it was absorbed into the Redlands Unified School District. It is

³ Peggy Christian, *Historic San Timoteo Canyon: A Pictorial Tour, Myths and Legends* (Morongo Valley, California: Sagebrush Press, 2002), 21.

⁴ Following are the two lines about desegregation “This arrangement [segregation] carried into the 1940s, until, at the school board meeting in 1942 the Bryn Mawr PTA president Rafaela Rey (herself an alumna of the school) spoke for the Hispanics – demanding desegregation, meaning the right of all the children to attend the new Mission School on California Avenue.” Keld J. Reynolds, *Sunshine, Citrus, and Science: The Loma Linda Community Story* (City of Loma Linda, 1985), 145–46.

⁵ Reynolds, 146.

⁶ A newspaper article written in 2005 for instance links the desegregation of the Bryn Mawr School to the *Mendez* (1947) case as well as to *Brown vs Board* (1954) The most researched written account is by local historian Tom Atchley who details the history of the Mission School and consequently the Mission School District in his work produced for the San Bernardino County Museum. Atchley situates the history of Bryn Mawr School and provides an overview of Americanization policy utilizing various newspaper reports in Redlands. C. L. Lopez, “New Life as a Church and Landmark,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, July 28, 2005, Loma Linda (I), Smiley Library, Redlands; Atchley, “Mission School: A History.”

unclear what happened to the records. Upon my request for Mission School records, the Redlands School District office could only locate Mission School registers from 1945 and 1946. Additionally, without any surviving copies of *El Sol*, the local Spanish language newspaper that covered events in San Bernardino County, there are only fragments to work from. Much of the news and happenings of Mexican communities do not appear in surviving newspapers like the *Redlands Daily Facts* or *The San Bernardino County Sun*, which actively worked to support the country town social system. The documentation of the lives and interests of growers were saved because they had the power and institutional access to preserve their records in official repositories, while the documents that tell the story of the laborers have not. This archival erasure and perpetuates symbolic annihilation, and the continued invisibility of school segregation in Bryn Mawr and San Bernardino County, at large.⁷

Thirdly, Mexican school desegregation has been primarily studied as a litigation phenomenon, exacerbating existing erasures of Mexican American women. One of the first studies to document community resistance to segregation was Wollenberg's 1976 study of the 1947 *Mendez vs Westminster* case which officially ended Mexican school segregation in California. His focus is mostly on tracing the "inter-relationship between two supremely important American institutions: the schools and the courts."⁸ After Wollenberg, other studies followed suit that focused extensively on tracing the

⁷ For more on the power of the archive see: Caswell, "Seeing Yourself in History."

⁸ Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed*, 1.

relationship between the community and the courts.⁹ While litigation is immensely critical within historical study, a single-minded focus overlooks the use of other forms of resistance. Within much of the scholarship, victory and success are achieved only as a result of litigation achievements. For example, Philippa Strum dismissed resistance outside of the courts.¹⁰ In her recounting of the *Mendez vs Westminster* case, she argues that “By 1945, parental action had led the Ontario school board to discuss integration, and there were protests in San Bernardino, Mendota, and Riverside as well. None of those protests, however, resulted in litigation. In any event, the Mendez’s decided to fight.”¹¹ Framing litigation as the only valid way of “fighting” against segregation invalidates grassroots protests, boycotts, and other movements.¹² This viewpoint restricts

⁹ Richard R. Valencia, *Chicano Students and the Courts: The Mexican American Legal Struggle for Educational Equality* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2008), <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucr/detail.action?docID=865424>; Amanda Marie Liang, “Inland Empire Schools and Mendez v. Westminster,” 2012, <http://escholarship.org.mimas.calstatela.edu/uc/item/6g16z3bw.pdf>; Philippa Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster: School Desegregation and Mexican-American Rights*, Landmark Law Cases & American Society (Lawrence, Kan: University Press of Kansas, 2010).

¹⁰ Similar patterns are seen elsewhere in the literature. González’s 1990 study, for example, introduces his study through a litigation lens, “Victories include the Lemon Grove Incident, the Mendez Case, the Delgado Case followed by student, sit-ins, marches and the implementation of Chicano/Latino Studies and much more.” Here González poses court victories first, other forms of resistance second. As a result, many books on desegregation focus exclusively on litigation. For example, Valencia focuses exclusively on how communities interacted with the courts through the lens of critical race theory, which while helpful, does not provide a holistic view of the range of community resistance against segregated schools. “This book consists of an introduction, a conclusion, and eight chapters that cover various categories of Mexican American - initiated school litigation... In doing so, I draw from critical race theory, critical legal studies - especially the notion of indeterminacy, which I use to explain the discretionary nature of judicial decisions - and postcolonial scholarship.” González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, xxii; Valencia, *Chicano Students and the Courts*, xv.

¹¹ Strum, *Mendez v. Westminster*, 38.

¹² Focusing primarily on litigation also leads to a more organizational and institutional focus. Many of these studies focus on the role of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) in their support for legal efforts, particularly in the *Mendez* case. But many scholars, with the notable exception of Matt García, fail to note the organization’s conservatism and lack of support for recent Mexican immigrants who were also impacted by segregation. While the *Mendez vs Westminster* case was critically important to the disintegration of segregated schools in the state as well as support for *Brown vs. Board* these works often frame litigation and a favorable decision as the ultimate form of community resistance. Other studies have

the types of resistance deemed worthy of historical focus to court cases and by doing so erases other forms of protest.

Within descriptions of the “fight” for desegregation, the “fighters” have been frequently categorized as men. Scholars have often focused on the actions of Mexican servicemen returning from World War II as the primary agents of change, particularly for desegregation.¹³ Emphasizing World War II as a flashpoint, González claims that “Indeed, records for the twenties and thirties demonstrate the fact that community organizations and representatives voiced their opposition and struggled against segregation. However, a big wave of protest occurred during and shortly after the Second World War, about the same time that anti-Mexican hysteria was sweeping Los Angeles and other urban centers.”¹⁴ While González does acknowledge earlier forms of resistance, he frames these as a proto-movement, which was used to set up the true “wave of protest”

noted the role of the Mexican consulate in community resistance. Namely, in Alvarez’s study of the *Lemon Grove* court case, the community was able to reach out to the Mexican Consulate for assistance and support and with their efforts close a recently opened segregated school. His study indicates how recent immigrants were able to work within an official multi-national framework. Because scholarship focuses so heavily on official avenues for community action and activism, much of the focus on “community” has instead tended towards a focus on individual leaders within the movement and the judicial process itself. Robert R. Alvarez, “The Lemon Grove Incident San Diego, CA,” *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (1986): 116–35.

¹³ Scholars that place Mendez as the apex of school desegregation often formulate a very patriotic narrative, situating Mexican American veterans as the main actors and as the struggle for rights they were fighting for abroad. This trajectory situates Mexican school desegregation within the larger civil rights trajectory and also its politics of respectability. However, recent studies relating desegregation to the Cold War era have asserted that, “The Cold War created a constraining environment for domestic politics. It also gave rise to new opportunities for those who could exploit Cold War anxieties, while yet remaining within the bounds of acceptable “Americanism.” Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights Race and the Image of American Democracy*, [New ed.] / with a new preface by the author., Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century America (Princeton, N.J. ; Princeton University Press, 2011), 15. See also González’s 6th chapter “Inter-American and Intercultural Education.” In González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*.

¹⁴ González, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, 21.

brought about by veterans in the post-war era.¹⁵ The postwar narrative centers on the heroic Mexican American male soldier, eager to solidify for himself and his family the rights he fought for abroad. This is primarily a masculinist narrative centering on patriotism, bravery, and duty, all aspects of male citizenship, which ignores the activism of women. As a result, Mexican men are categorized as “fighters” and women as “supporters” of the movement, a trend reproduced and later criticized within the Chicano Movement of the 1960s.¹⁶

One key exception to the male-centered image of desegregation is Sylvia Mendez. The identity and story of Sylvia Mendez, the daughter of plaintiff Gonzalo Mendez and the student at the center of the *Mendez vs Westminster* case, has remained central to the representation of the case’s history and memory. She continues to be a key advocate for educational equality.¹⁷ Her face and story have become emblematic of the victimized segregated pupil who was inspired by her parents’ activism to share her experiences as a segregated student and advocate for educational equality. While Sylvia Mendez has enormously contributed to the memory of the case and contemporary activism, in 1947 she was an 8-year-old child and was not able to fully participate in the desegregation

¹⁵ Valencia similarly claims that “The return of servicemen of color from World War II served as another factor that helped to reignite both the Mexican American and African American desegregation campaigns. The bravery and accomplishments of these men during the war were often unparalleled.” Valencia, *Chicano Students and the Courts*, 22.

¹⁶ Blackwell, *Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement*.

¹⁷ Mendez has actively worked to spread knowledge of the Mendez case, raising awareness of her parents and the other co-plaintiff’s contributions to civil rights. Her and her parents’ names have been central in commemorative efforts including the naming of a Santa Ana school the “Gonzalo and Felicitas Mendez Fundamental Intermediate School,” the renaming of the Berkeley Le Conte Elementary School to the Sylvia Mendez Elementary School, and even a U.S. Postal Service Commemorative stamp in 2007. Mendez was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Obama in 2011.

process (in this case litigation) like the adults around her.¹⁸ My goal in this chapter is to center women not just as victims and supporters of desegregation, but as active members in the desegregation process.

In more recent years, studies have begun to take the desegregation activism of Mexican American women seriously. The work of Nadine Bermudez stands out as a key example.¹⁹ Her dissertation “Mexican American Female Activism in the Age of De Jure Segregation” works to reorient the way female participation in the *Mendez vs. Westminster* case is analyzed. She analyzes these women’s participation through the lens of motherhood by bringing Chicana scholarship to the study of desegregation litigation.²⁰ Bermudez’s thesis centers primarily on the *Mendez* case, and she argues that even within

¹⁸ Bermudez in her study of the women of Westminster, interviewed Sylvia Mendez and found while Sylvia remembered testifying in court there are no signs of her testimony in the official record, “Ms. Mendez vividly recalled testifying on behalf of the plaintiffs, yet there exists no official record of her testimony in any of the documents surrounding the Mendez case. It could be that she was interviewed by the attorney for the plaintiffs, David Marcus, as a potential witness, but was never actually called upon to testify in court. Nevertheless, the absence of Sylvia’s testimony in any “official” capacity speaks to the manner in which history is sometimes rendered, and the importance of counterstory-telling. That is to say, even if Ms. Mendez never testified during the trial, she undoubtedly possessed expert knowledge about the experiences of children in “Mexican schools,” as well as their ability to speak English proficiently. Bermudez, “Mendez et al. v. Westminster School District et Al.,” 56.

¹⁹ Nadine Bermudez, “Mendez et al. v. Westminster School District et al.: Mexican American Female Activism in the Age of de Jure Segregation” (Los Angeles, University of California, Los Angeles, 2015), <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1648674868?accountid=14512>; An article by Torres-Rouff also briefly mentions the role of women. David Torres-Rouff, “Becoming Mexican: Segregated Schools and Social Scientists in Southern California, 1913—1946,” *South Calif Quart* 94, no. 1 (2012): 108–9.

²⁰ Bermudez borrows heavily from Mary Pardo and Vicki Ruíz, two pioneers in Chicana scholarship. Pardo’s study of the “Mothers of East L.A.” indicated how women utilized their position as mothers to inform their activism, seeing themselves as protectors of the neighborhood and their community. Following her efforts came the work of Vicki Ruíz. Although Ruíz was not focused on the history of desegregation, her findings that “Through mutual assistance and collective action, Mexican women have sought to exercise control over their lives at home, work, and neighborhood,” reinvigorated the study of women’s activism. Her focus on the varying avenues for female resistance through food preparation, participation in mutualistas, and holding the picket line indicated the variety of women’s activism and the extent of women’s community networks. Pardo, *Mexican American Women Activists*; Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*, xiii.

the relatively well-known case “analyses of women’s contributions to the *Mendez case* remain an area virtually ignored.”²¹ She concludes that the male-centered narrative of *Mendez* arose from the “patriarchal legal system,” societal sexism, and perceptions about Mexican womanhood.²² While she critiques the legal system and seeks to interview women who were not involved in court proceedings, due to the choice of subject matter, her study is still centered around the courts. Despite this, she is successful in unearthing the story of the women behind *Mendez* and how their testimony, childcare, and food preparation all contributed to the success of the case. Perhaps more importantly, Bermudez presents a “counter-story” through her “efforts to tell the story of the Mendez case from the perspective of those who lived it.”²³

While her study is critical, to further the investigation of women activists' participation in desegregation we must look beyond case studies of litigation. Studies that focus on local racialized structures can allow for the critical role of women in the dissolution of Mexican school segregation to come into focus. By analyzing the grassroots activism of Rey and Cruz, who operated outside of the courts and mobilized their motherhood, I present an alternative desegregation narrative. Their stories illustrate multifaceted activism, encompassing labor exploitation, as well as educational discrimination.

²¹ She does note two exceptions a 2007 article focusing on the life of Felicitas Mendez by McCormick and Ayala and a documentary film by Erika Bannett, *Tales of the Golden State: The Mendez v. Westminster Story*, for more see: Bermudez, “Mendez et al. v. Westminster School District et Al.,” 34.

²² Bermudez, 13.

²³ Bermudez, 77.

History of the Bryn Mawr School

The Bryn Mawr School was formed in 1911 specifically as a segregated school for Mexican students. The school was positioned in the center of Bryn Mawr proper and later two Mexican American neighborhoods of Juanita and 1st Streets grew around it. In my previous chapters, I have discussed the emergence of the school both within the context of the racialized landscape and Progressive Era education policy. Here I will attempt to provide an overview of education at Bryn Mawr School with what little archival resources are available.

It is difficult to assess student enrollment in the individual schools of the Mission District. However, looking at the “Annual Report for Public Schools,” which documented official enrollment data for each school in the county, it is clear that the enrollment in the



Figure 30: A class picture taken at the Bryn Mawr School in the 1920s. (Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society, Cooke and Yanez Collection)

Mission District jumps from 164 students in 1909 and 151 in 1910 to 201 students in 1911 and 1912, an increase of about 50 students. This jump in enrollment corresponds to the opening of the Bryn Mawr School.²⁴ The statistics indicate that a majority of these 50 newly enrolled students were Mexican or Mexican American students who were sent to the Bryn Mawr Mexican school.²⁵ The increase in enrollment indicates that before the opening of Bryn Mawr School the students were not attending any school in the Mission District.²⁶ The Bryn Mawr School, or the “Bryn Mawr Building” as it is referred to in the

²⁴ *Annual Report Public Schools: San Bernardino County, 1915.*

²⁵ The Annual Report statistics are supported by school photos from the 1920s which show about 30-50 students.

²⁶ It is possible but not likely that students could attend the nearby Loma Linda Academy. However, Loma Linda Academy was and is a private school for students of the Seventh Day Adventist faith, and most Bryn Mawr residents were and continue to be Catholic.

1911 Public School Directory, names Pauline Powers from Los Angeles as the sole teacher for the Bryn Mawr School. Earning a yearly salary of \$675, she had not previously taught in the Mission District.²⁷ At the same time, the Mission “Central Building” retained three teachers, and the Barton Building had a single teacher, Alice Horton, who had taught in the Mission District since 1909.

The next year most likely saw a rise in enrollment in the Bryn Mawr School as the number of teachers increased to two in 1912. However, the increased enrollment did not lead to improved educational opportunities. At the Bryn Mawr School, Mary E. Felton was the Vice Principal teaching third and fourth grade and Vivian Yetts taught first and second grade. Tellingly, although the Barton Building had only one teacher, Alice Horton, she is listed in the directory as teaching first through seventh grade and Mission School is listed with three teachers together teaching first through eighth grade.²⁸ While the other local schools provided education up to seventh and eighth grade, Bryn Mawr stopped at just fourth grade. The education of the students at the Mexican School was purposefully limited, or viewed as being inherently limited, due to the ethnicity of the students enrolled. The discrepancy in the grade offerings at Bryn Mawr versus the Central and Barton Building belies typical assumptions that Mexican students could not and should not advance to higher grade levels. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the education of Bryn Mawr students, according to the official school

²⁷ A. S. McPherron, *Public School Directory: San Bernardino County California*, 1911.

²⁸ A. S. McPherron, *Public School Directory: San Bernardino County California*, 1912.

directories, peaked at sixth grade.²⁹ In the 1920s the Mission School District sent their elementary graduates to Redlands Junior High, and it seems that very few Bryn Mawr students had access to the privilege of attending high school.

The 1930s saw a great change in the district. After a disastrous flood in 1927, white parents felt that the 1904 Mission School Building was too vulnerable and plans for a newer school began. In 1935, the Mission District won a WPA grant for constructing a school farther north on California Street. Parents requested that the school be built following the Mission Architectural style to reflect the “heritage” of the district. As in other citrus belt towns, Mission “heritage” was a created heritage that relied on what McWilliams called the Spanish Fantasy Past, and most recently what Carl Sepulveda has called the “Spanish Imaginary,” which celebrated the process of “civilizing” and supported ideologies of white supremacy.³⁰ Construction cost \$185,000, and Mission School became the most expensive school built in the East San Bernardino Valley.³¹

Labor for the construction of Mission School was supplied by local WPA workers like Manuel Rey (husband of Rafaela Rey). He remembers “At this time, the WPA

²⁹ The single exception to the sixth-grade limit was during the 1917-1918 school year in which Mary E. Felton is listed as teaching fifth and eighth grades while Mary Eccles taught first through fourth grade. The single entry is more likely a mistake than an indication they briefly increased the standard of Education. Stanley, Grace C., *Public School Directory: San Bernardino County California*, 1918.

³⁰ McWilliams, Meier, and García, *North from Mexico*; Sepulveda, “California’s Mission Projects.”

³¹ Atchley, “Mission School: A History,” 55.

people come up, and I got a job helping people making adobes... we made adobes for the Asistencia, and I used to mold roofing tiles, floor tiles... and this new Mission School has

WORK ASSIGNMENT
EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION—STATE OF CALIFORNIA

No. **176676**

NAME: **REY, Manuel** Address: **Bryn Mawr**
 COUNTY: **SB**

SEX: **M** AGE: **29** RACE: **MEX mex** NO. IN FAM.: **5** DISTRICT: **2** CASE NUMBER: **1943L**

ASSIGNED AS: **Laborer** RATE PER HR.: **60¢** HOURS PER 4 WEEKS: **54** TO EARN: **32.40**

GROUP: **M** REPORT FOR WORK: **8 am** TIME: **8 am** DATE: **May 28** PROJECT NUMBER: **36 B1 253**

PROJECT NAME: **San Timoteo Creek and Live Oak Rd** LOCATION:

GOOD UNTIL: **6/20** SUBJECT TO CONTINUED AUTHORIZATION BY YOUR VISITOR.

HOURS	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THUR.	TOTAL
FIRST WEEK					2	2		
SECOND WEEK	1			3	1		6	
THIRD WEEK	7			1				
FOURTH WEEK								

REPLACES W. A. No. _____

IF FOR ANY REASON YOU DO NOT REPORT TO WORK ON THE DAY SPECIFIED ABOVE, YOU MUST IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY YOUR DISTRICT OFFICE, OTHERWISE YOUR DIRECT RELIEF WILL STOP ON DATE AS SCHEDULED ABOVE, AND THIS WORK ASSIGNMENT WILL BE CANCELLED.

TREW SIGNATURE OF PLACEMENT OFFICER
 Signature of Manuel Rey SIGNATURE OF WORKER
 I. WORKER

new tiles that I made, and some bricks that I made.”³²

The state-of-the-art Mission School was built to protect white students and provide them with modern education facilities including an

auditorium, cafeteria, and PA system. The construction of the school was a revival not

Figure 31: Manuel Rey’s work assignment from the emergency relief administration. (Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society, Coyazo Collection)

just of Mission style but of the racialized structure and layered colonialisms of the space itself. Mexican students remained in the flood path, in a school building constructed in 1885 and 1911. However, the new and safe Mission School Building, only open to white students, was constructed with Mexican labor. Manuel Rey’s hands were utilized to build the Mission School, yet his daughters were barred from stepping foot on school grounds. Within the country town social system, Mexican labor was allowed in the creation of white space but they were barred from entering it.

³² “I Remember Bryn Mawr” Tape 3.

Despite the initial exclusion, Manuel Rey asserted ownership over the school building and space by using possessive language, “tiles that I made.” As with homeownership, discussed in chapter 5, claiming access and ownership of objects and space could be the beginning of access and even social membership. In a few years, his wife would succeed in gaining their daughters' access to the school their father helped build. Within some families, both the parents and their children had attended the Bryn Mawr segregated school. The Bryn Mawr School existed since 1911, by 1940 the school represented enduring and entrenched systems of discrimination and segregation present in Bryn Mawr.

The Early 1940s in Bryn Mawr

In order to understand the social and political context in Bryn Mawr as Rey began to agitate for change, it is helpful to assess how children, particularly Mexican children were perceived at the time. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the United States' entry into World War II, Redlands and the Mission District braced for war. As a result, the production of citizens and agricultural products was viewed as central patriotic duties in service to the war effort. The heightened concern over children as representatives of America's future placed additional stress on education and particularly on students. In Redlands and the Mission District, students' bodies became central to local war-effort debates about labor and patriotism. It was in this context of hyper-patriotism that Rey brought the issue of segregation to the Mission District School Board.

While the war changed many adults' roles, it also affected children.³³ Feeding, schooling, and raising strong American children became a wartime priority. Total war calls upon all of its citizens, young and old, to participate. As young men were sent off to the front, their younger siblings, even more so than before, held the substantial burden of American "civilization." Schools are the extension of the state and at their core, sites of indoctrination. As an editorial in the *Redlands Daily Facts* argues, "The schools stand ready, as in the past, to do their part, in every way possible to bring this war to a successful conclusion."³⁴ Local schools, the author asserts, will be the primary sites for training students in three ways; to have healthy bodies, to be citizens, and to be ready when they "will be called upon in the near future for actual military service or for work in defense industries." The body of the student, their physical health, their mind, their dedication to their country, and their labor are framed as tools of the state, as objects that warranted care, but also control.

In the wake of the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, and the total war mobilization of the American war machine, concerns regarding agricultural labor entered into public discourse. As discussed in chapter 1, citrus fruit growers had always seen their trade as central to both California and the United States' economy and, spurred on by industry propaganda, the country's health.³⁵ The health benefits of citrus had been

³³ In chapter 2 "Americanos Todos: Mexican Women and the Wartime State and Media" Elizabeth Escobedo lays out how women responded to American propaganda calling for hemispheric unity. Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*.

³⁴ "Editorial: The School's Part," *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 5, 1942.

³⁵ Both Hartig and Sackman provide excellent analyses of citrus industry marketing tactics lead by Sunkist in the first half of the twentieth century. Hartig, "Citrus Growers and the Construction of the Southern California Landscape, 1880–1940"; Sackman, "By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them."

emphasized and exaggerated during the first war, but the nutritional benefits were ever more crucial in the Second World War's Pacific Theater. For example, the military used oranges as a method of preventing scurvy. On the home front, propaganda encouraged Americans to ration but maintain a healthy diet and to continue raising strong children. An editorial in the *Redlands Daily Facts* noted that of the copious foods listed on the Federal Security Administration's list of "the right foods," "Every item of the menu is a year-round commonplace of California farm production, grown and harvested in orchard, field, and garden through the long months that imprison eastern farmlands under snow and frost and slush."³⁶ Growers believed their industry was paramount during war-time because they fed the troops as well as fit Americans. While the editorial positions the East Coast as helpless and "imprisoned," California holds the key to America's freedom, through nutrition and health. However, behind heroic depictions of California's agricultural economy were serious concerns about labor shortages.

It has been commonly acknowledged that women of all racial backgrounds took up new forms of labor and work during World War II as men were sent off to war.³⁷ Within the citrus industry many women, particularly Mexican American women, were already employed. With the availability of new higher-paying defense jobs, many women left the citrus industry. To solve the labor shortage, in May of 1942, citrus leaders

³⁶ The recommended list included "at least a pint of milk a day for everyone, more for children; at least one orange, tomato, grapefruit or raw cabbage; "one big helping" of vegetable, green, leafy and yellow, some raw and some cooked; potatoes or fish, or sometimes dried beans or peas; at least three or four eggs a week; bread and cereal." Editorial: California Sets the Table," *Redlands Daily Facts*, January 5, 1942.

³⁷ Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*; Karen Anderson, *Wartime Women: Sex Roles, Family Relations, and the Status of Women during World War II*, Contributions in Women's Studies, No. 20 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981).

attempted to force students into the fields and packinghouses. The citrus industry had a history of child labor, most times unsanctioned. Citrus scholar Gilbert González notes that there was “a widespread 'attitude that school attendance should not be allowed to interfere with the supply of cheap farm labor.' Not only did officials fail to enforce laws, but deliberate loopholes in the laws themselves made lax enforcement legal.”³⁸ Within citrus growing communities, older Mexican American men fondly recall their time as *ratas* when they would scurry among the groves picking low-hanging fruit. Older boys



Figure 32: Bryn Mawr students pose in front of the orange groves. Many of the boys wear work overalls.
(Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society, Cooke and Yanez Collection)

³⁸ González, *Labor and Community*, 1994, 128.

would accompany their fathers on smudging missions, helping to fill the pots with kerosene. In early images of students at the Bryn Mawr School, many of them are dressed in work overalls. Segregated schools supported racial capitalism and focused on molding students into model workers. Although child labor was already present in the industry, the numbers were still deemed insufficient during the wartime crisis.

As a possible solution to the labor shortage “problem,” citrus country town elite N. B. Hinckley assembled a “forum” of growers, educators, and concerned parents. On the grounds of Mission School, they mulled over, “The possibility of using older school children” to “meet the anticipated labor shortage for harvesting the crops of the region.”³⁹ At the meeting, the Redlands-Bryn Mawr Center of the Farm Bureau decided emphatically that “The California School Code should be amended to permit the holding of classes on legal holidays and Saturday Mornings.”⁴⁰ They called not just for temporary labor but to permanently build into the code further “flexibility in the law.” Flexibility would expand the exploitation of children in support of the citrus industry.

At the same meeting Walter Hentschke, “manager of Redlands Cooperative Fruit Association, said that packing houses will have to develop inter-change of workers to a greater extent than they have done in the past. Every trained hand must be given an opportunity to work to the limit of his desire.”⁴¹ Hentschke cleverly describes his labor demands as an individuals’ “desire” to work. This desire is also coded as patriotic in the

³⁹ “Labor Shortage to Be Studied,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, May 1, 1942.

⁴⁰ “School Law Change to Help Farm Labor Situation Urged,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, May 6, 1942.

⁴¹ “School Law Change to Help Farm Labor Situation Urged.”

context of the attack on Pearl Harbor and the supply of labor “diminished by the war.” The growers’ message was clear; if one desired to help their country, then they should provide their labor to the citrus industry. Within the context of war patriotism, the needs of industry came before the needs of the child. A few days later, an article about school board elections indicates that Walter Hentschke, “who has been president of the board for the past six years, is retiring this year and leaves a vacancy on both the high school and elementary boards.”⁴² Hentschke was a packinghouse owner and a long-time school board member. He used his position of power within the school district to call for the relaxation of child labor laws in order to benefit his business and his industry. Within the country town social system, schools, and citrus labor were interconnected issues.

In the end, across San Bernardino County thousands of children were registered for agricultural work. A May 19th article states that “All boys and girls 12 years of age or older” would be registered for “harvest work” but the actual cards needed for registration would be found “in the rural elementary schools, all junior high schools, senior high schools, and junior colleges.”⁴³ While it is expected that these cards would be placed in schools with older student bodies, their placement in rural elementary schools begs a second glance. As discussed in chapter 3, due to the racialized landscape of California, rural education was often invested in the issue of foreign rurality. Taking account of the citrus industry’s system of racial capitalism as well as the industry’s history of exploiting Mexican child labor, it seems likely that the new “flexibility” in the educational code

⁴² “Editorials: School Election Tomorrow,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, May 14, 1942.

⁴³ “School Children Register for Work,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, May 19, 1942.

affected Mexican and other students racialized as “foreign” differently than it did white students. Within the context of World War II, the bodies of children, and in particular children racialized as “foreign,” were called upon to labor for the state.

In Bryn Mawr, the education officials and members of the school board were composed of the citrus elite. In chapter 4, I illustrated how Grace C. Stanley’s education theories were motivated by her own position as a grove owner, but the local citrus elite did not just take on professional positions. In the Mission School District, much of the volunteer and non-professional positions were also controlled by citrus interests. Of particular interest is the position of the district clerk and school board trustees. Since the late nineteenth century, the school board was comprised of the citrus country town elite. Members of the Frink and Cole families were in power as clerks and trustees while they controlled the Cole and Frink “Mexican” camps. At the same time, packinghouse owner Allen Break served as a Mission District School Board Trustee in the few years leading up to his ownership of the 1st Street neighborhood (the Bryn Mawr Tract). The governance of the schools was in the hands of those whose industry historically relied on segregation, discrimination, and the exploitation of child labor.

It is in the context of heightened labor concern and efforts to control children’s bodies, that Rafaela Rey mounted her campaign. Collusion between schools and industry was readily apparent in the 1940s. Beginning in 1937, one packinghouse owner, Wesley Break, had a seat on the Mission School District Board of Education. Wesley was following his father Allen’s footsteps running the family’s packinghouse and extensive

acreage. The Breaks owned sizable holdings in Bryn Mawr, as noted in his biography, “His extensive landholdings then included 110 acres of Bryn Mawr citrus and a third interest in 1,600 acres of foothill lands.”⁴⁴ Wesley had been a pupil at the Mission School in 1904 after the school was renovated in that year.⁴⁵ In many ways his life emulated the Country Life ideal; he was a well-educated man, a successful agribusinessman, and he was active as a community leader. His seat on the school board, as well as the historical connection between schooling and citrus, meant that to confront the segregated school was to antagonize a powerful employer and landowner in the area.

Bringing About Desegregation

In the late 1930s, older Mexican children were finally allowed to attend Mission School. Rey took advantage of these changes to completely disrupt the system of segregated education. Up until the 1938-1939 school year, two teachers taught 1st through 6th grade at the segregated Bryn Mawr School. Mexican students could only attend Mission School for 7th and 8th grade, and the first evidence of Mexican student attendance is in 1938 in which Mario Amabile, Manuel Barron, Raul Landeros, Phillip Martinez, Mateo Rey, and Jimmy Selayo joined Robert Break, Hubert Davis and other white students for graduation.⁴⁶ During the 1939-1940 school year, more Mexican students were allowed entry to Mission School. The same year, a single teacher, Lulu R. Kuhns,

⁴⁴ John C. Funk, *San Bernardino County Supervisors 1855-1999* (County of San Bernardino, California, 1999), 46.

⁴⁵ Funk, 46.

⁴⁶ Redlands Council Fifth District, *Mission Parent -- Teacher Association Publicity Record April 1 1938 to April 1, 1939* (Redlands (Calif.), 1939).

taught first through fourth grade at Bryn Mawr School while the older children were moved to Mission School.

Looking at the varied experiences of Rafaela Rey's three oldest daughters

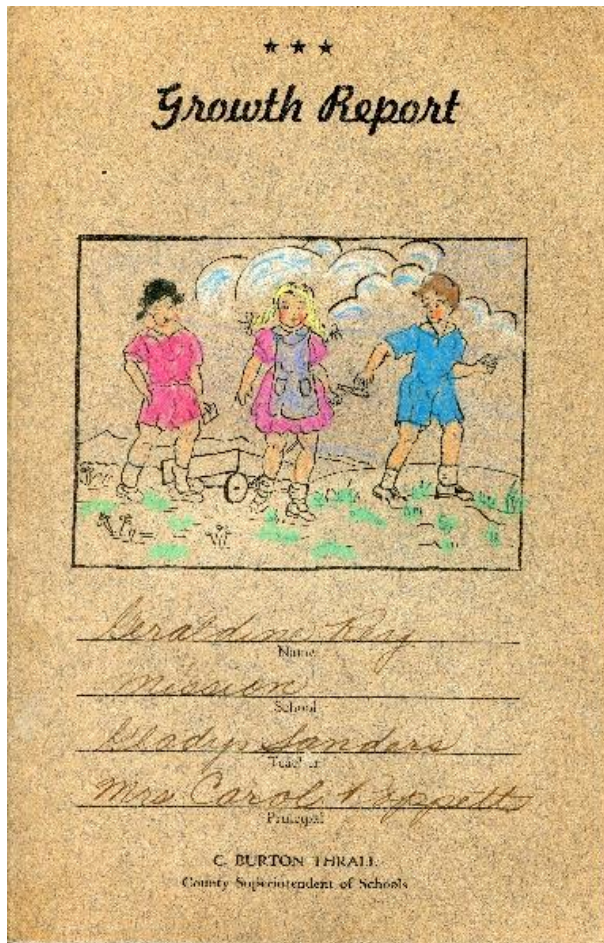


Figure 33: Geraldine Rey's third-grade growth report from Gladys Sanders class. This report was saved by Rafaela Rey and was found in her things by her grandson Frank Coyazo. (Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society, Coyazo Collection)

illustrates the process of partial integration. Rafaela and Manuel Rey both knew the English language, and their daughters grew up bilingual. Despite their daughters' language proficiency, they had been forced to attend the segregated Bryn Mawr School. Lydia, the eldest, was twelve and Florence was ten during the 1939-1940 school year, and for the first time they were able to attend Mission School after years of segregated schooling. However, Rey's second youngest daughter Geraldine (Gerry) was left at the segregated Bryn Mawr School for her first-grade year. The next year Fernanda Cruz arrived to teach kindergarten through second grade. As a result, Gerry was

taught for the first time by a teacher from the same ethnic background. During the 1941-1942 school year, she joined her sisters at Mission School in Gladys Sanders' third-grade

classroom. More is known about Gerry's experience because Rey kept her third-grade report card. Absent from the teacher's comments (from both semesters) is any discussion of English language issues. In fact, she received the highest "grade" listed as "does his best" in reading, listening to stories, and oral directions. Gerry seems active within the classroom. Her teacher notes that, "Geraldine has been inclined to talk out without listening" and that "She is anxious to help in the room and is improving in her work."⁴⁷ Gerry was doing well, interacting with other students, learning, and adapting to the classroom environment as many other children do. Gerry's experience, as indicated by the teacher's report, varies significantly from Cruz's own experiences in her early days of learning when she did not know the language and felt trapped and anxious at school. Clearly, the Mission School administration's fears about Mexican students' inability to operate in English were exaggerated, making it clear that these students were segregated due to their ethnic identity and their racialization as perpetually "foreign."

At the close of 1941, Rey's three eldest daughters had escaped segregation, however, the youngest, Francis Rey, was set to start her education at the segregated school in two short years. While we cannot be sure what exactly motivated Rey to desegregate the school, as she does not mention her reasoning in her only video interview on the subject, it seems likely that after seeing her daughters' experiences at Mission, and in particular Gerry's experience beginning integrated education at a young age, she rejected the possibility of her youngest experiencing two years of segregation at Bryn

⁴⁷ Gladys Sanders, "Growth Report" (San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, 1942 1941), Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society.

Mawr. In 1942 Rey stood up to the Mission School District officials declaring that slow, restrained change was not nearly enough. The first and most risky step was to bring her complaints to the school board.

Even while Rey had access to white space and respectability, challenging the status quo was never a simple task. Within the tight-knit community of Bryn Mawr, power was firmly consolidated among the key growing families, and as argued in the earlier chapters, they had a vested interest in maintaining discriminatory education systems. When Rey sought to dismantle the system, packinghouse owner Wesley Break held a key position in the Mission District School Board. His position created a highly unbalanced power dynamic, as Ruíz, keenly notes, “Confronting “America” often meant confronting the labor contractor, the boss, the landlord or la migrá.”⁴⁸ Break’s power and economic interests ran deep in the community, as it was his and his father’s land on which some of the Bryn Mawr community resided. Rey was also employed with Bryn Mawr Fruit Growers’ Association, a large packinghouse in the area owned by N. B. Hinkley.⁴⁹ Rey was confronting not just the system of education but also systems of child labor within the citrus industry. Within the country town social system the stakes of confrontation were high. To attack one grower, and especially the racial systems which supported the citrus industry, would often incur the wrath of all the growers, and put one’s livelihood in jeopardy.

⁴⁸ Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*, 32.

⁴⁹ Wesley Break had worked as a foreman at Bryn Mawr Fruit Growers from 1920-1921.

Of the few oral histories describing the process of desegregation, two come from the 1987 *I Remember Bryn Mawr* documentary. There, a friend of director Frank Coyazo, Arnie Kosmatka, interviewed Coyazo's grandfather Manuel Rey.

Arnie: How about schools?

Manuel: We had one. We had two schools but one of them was for white people only.

Arnie: Really?

Manuel: And then one for Bryn Mawr. The one on Bryn Mawr was for the- white peo – Mexican people.

Arnie: When did that change?

Manuel: Oh, it changed, uh let's see. I can't remember when it changed but it must have been around '32 or something around there.

Arnie: Aight so around about 1932 what is not what is now the Loma Linda Academy... uh

Manuel: No, No, No, No,

Arnie: No?

Manuel: The Mission School

Arnie: Oh, the Mission School,

Manuel Speaking but Arnie talking over him

Arnie: It was uh for... for what

Manuel: It was for white people only

Arnie: White people only and uh about the mid-30s it changed?

Manuel: Yes

Arnie: And who was responsible for that change?

Manuel: Well responsible for that change was my wife.

Arnie: And what's her name?

Manuel: Rafaela Rey.

Arnie: Fantastic. Can you tell us about your early jobs?⁵⁰

Here Manuel Rey clearly names his wife Rafaela Rey as the instigator of desegregation.

The interview snippet also illustrates Kosmatka's interviewing technique. Since the oral history was conducted at a large community event, where they had much to record, and because the content was meant to be edited together as a documentary, Arnie is particularly focused on creating sound bites and playing the role of a reporter who would synthesize and regurgitate the stories of his informants. As a result, the interviewee is

⁵⁰ Coyazo, "I Remember Bryn Mawr" Tape 3, pt. 1:20.

almost fighting with him for airtime, and details and discussion are neglected in exchange for the collection of more bites of information.

In the single archival video recording of Rafaela Rey taped for *I Remember Bryn Mawr* she recounts her involvement in the desegregation process clearly and simply. The same interview context frames Rafaela Rey's interview and partially explains her response in her own interview. Kosmatka, the interviewer, begins the interview with a leading question:

Arnie: We understand that you were instrumental in uh helping the children in the area get all the same education, can you explain that? Uh for us, for history?

Rafaela: Well, uh, we had this school for the Mexican people, and the Mexican kids and then they had a Mission School on Mission Road, and then they built the new Mission School on California. And they were just wanting to send the Anglos there. So, then I thought, why not our own kids too?

Arnie: Sure

Rafaela: So, I got the board of trustees together and I argued with them and I won about sending them to the school. And eventually, I closed that little school, and all our kids went to the Mission School.

Arnie: Can you tell us something about your travels, we understand in the early days it was rather difficult to travel but we understand that you did it anyway.⁵¹

Rey provides the sound bite that Kosmatka desires and he quickly moves on to a new subject. While the content is short, her consistent use of the first person and possessive language communicates to the audience that it was her actions that galvanized change. She, through her existing community service and respectability in the Mexican community, became the one who could speak not just for her children, but as she says for "our kids too." As a community mother, she spoke for all the children in Bryn Mawr. Further, her use of the word "argued" is also central here. It illustrates that Rey mobilized her respectability and relative social membership within the white community to demand

⁵¹ Coyazo, pt. 12:00.

space, time, and attention to “argue” with a school board filled with citrus country town elites. She did not ask or plead for change, she demanded it. She spoke directly to authority, unabashedly argued with the status quo, and as she says, “won.”

Rey had proven that she could argue with authority, but it would take more to change a policy that had been in place for thirty years. Rey had the support of Bryn Mawr School teacher Fernanda Cruz, but she still needed assistance from outside the Mexican community. The effort needed someone who had the security to stand up to the established norm in citrus-run Bryn Mawr. That woman would be Ruth T. Davis. Davis was born Ruth Townsend in Hamilton, Ohio in 1895. She moved with her family in 1910 to San Diego where she met her husband Irving Franklin Davis. They later moved to Loma Linda where Irving Davis bought swaths of citrus groves in Loma Linda, Bryn Mawr, and surrounding areas. As their son Don Davis recalls, “we owned an 80-acre grove almost across the street there from Mountain View... we used the packinghouses right there in Bryn Mawr.”⁵² As grove owners, they employed picking crews to harvest the oranges and sent their bounty to the packinghouses owned by the Bryn Mawr Fruit Growers’ Association.

Irving Davis had held a position on the School Board from 1935 to 1938 and Ruth was active in the Mission School PTA. Ruth Davis’s first job outside of the house was at Norton Airforce Base as a receptionist in the officer’s club in the early 1940s. Davis was an active member of the First Congregationalist Church and a member of the Soroptimist

⁵² Donald Davis and Andréa Davis, Interview Regarding Ruth Davis, interview by Audrey Maier, May 31, 2018, Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society.

Club of Redlands, a local women's charity club. For sport Davis competed in archery competitions and helped build the first field archery course in the Redlands area. As her granddaughter Andréa Davis describes her, "She was an amazing woman, she did archery, she divorced before it was really ok for women to do that and owned her own business."⁵³ Ruth Davis was the ideal choice as an ally, she had a citrus background and a prominent family status, but she was also going through marital problems and disagreed with her husband. To others in the community Ruth Davis embodied the expected dynamics of a grower's wife, she was active in church, invested in her children's education, and had access to wealth, and therefore relative security.

In 1942, after five years of service on the Mission School Board, Wesley Break left his position on the board to run for County Supervisor, which he won in 1944 and held for twenty years.⁵⁴ With his absence, Rey convinced Ruth T. Davis, who she knew to be against school segregation, to run as a write-in candidate for the Mission School Board against the incumbent Harry G. Phelps, who would have maintained the segregated status quo. Phelps and his wife were deeply involved in the Mission School District since the 1930s, with Mrs. Harry Phelps serving as the PTA President and the Publicity Chairman for Mission School.⁵⁵ Getting a woman write-in candidate on the school board in 1942 was no simple task. Rey actively campaigned for Ruth T. Davis and in the end, they were successful.

⁵³ Davis and Davis.

⁵⁴ Funk, *San Bernardino County Supervisors 1855-1999*.

⁵⁵ Redlands Council Fifth District, *Mission Parent -- Teacher Association Publicity Record April 1 1938 to April 1, 1939*, 1.

A part of the success most likely came from the Mexican American community whose large numbers in Bryn Mawr could sway any election. However, Mexican American political participation was often discounted and existing racial structures made it difficult for the community to exercise their right to vote. As historian San Miguel observes in his study of integration in Houston, “local officials could ignore or dismiss the Mexican community's needs because of the lack of Mexican-Americans in school decision-making positions such as the local school board...The same factors also discouraged the community from electing individuals from the barrios who could represent them on the board.”⁵⁶ Depressed levels of Mexican American participation were a result of discrimination, but also served to perpetuate it.

Country town elites were aware of the Mexican community’s lack of participation and used it to their advantage. Growers sought to monitor their workforce. At least three separate times, the Redlands Chamber of Commerce submitted a packinghouse survey asking all of the nearby packing house managers to provide details about their Mexican workforce. These surveys asked about workers’ residency, their efficiency, their education level, and they also asked about workers' civic participation. In a 1937 packinghouse survey an anonymous grower provided the following answers:

58. To what extent do unnaturalized Mexicans vote in elections?
-Do not vote here
59. To what extent do they participate actively in politics?
-Very little
60. Do local politicians owe their power and success to the Mexican vote?

⁵⁶ Guadalupe San Miguel, *Brown, Not White: School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston*, 1st ed, University of Houston Series in Mexican American Studies, no. 3 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001), 22.

-Not at all.⁵⁷

These responses indicate little political participation or political influence among the Mexican community. While question 58 focused on “unnaturalized Mexicans,” the 1930s saw a rise in political participation among Mexican Americans. While previous generations of unnaturalized workers could not voice their beliefs through the ballot box, Rey as a second-generation Mexican American could. She took up the call of *El Espectador* and aspired to demonstrate the power of the Mexican vote.

The race was close, but on May 16, 1942, Davis received 62 votes and Phelps received 54.⁵⁸ Davis’s win shifted the balance of the school board. Once she was installed an official vote to end school segregation was called and Bryn Mawr School was ordered to be closed. Fernanda Cruz, who had supported Rey’s activism was now poised to lead the integration of the Mission District. Less than a month later, Cruz was honored as “a member of the Mission School faculty” at the PTA final meeting.⁵⁹ Although she was welcomed to Mission in June of 1942, the official county school directory indicates that she remained at Bryn Mawr School teaching kindergarten through second grade for the 1942-1943 school year, although it is unclear if the directory was accurate for the entire year. Rey became president of the Mission School PTA in 1942 and oversaw the desegregation of Bryn Mawr School. The Bryn Mawr School building was officially closed in 1944.

⁵⁷ “Questions about Mexican Labor,” 1920s, VII Citrus Collection, F. Commercial Aspects 7) Survey of Packinghouses 1937, 1929, A.K Smiley Public Library, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Collection.

⁵⁸ “Two Write-Ins Successful in School Voting,” *The San Bernardino Sun*, May 16, 1942.

⁵⁹ “Seven Honored at Mission P.T.A. Final Meeting,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, June 4, 1942.

In the singular mention of the school's closure in the *Redlands Daily Facts*, Bryn Mawr School is referred to as the "Bryn Mawr Mexican school." The article makes no mention of the details of segregation, reasons for segregation, or issues with integration. Instead, the main focus is economics. The article talks extensively about bidding for the property at which "a minimum price of \$5000 has been established."⁶⁰ The final rationale for the school's closure is represented as economic.

In recent years school costs have been increasing through higher expenses for supplies and for salaries, according to Mrs. Carol Poppett, principal. On the other hand, the allotment to the district from the state and federal government has not increased. The school board therefore is seeking ways to reduce operating expenses. The closing of the Bryn Mawr School was decided upon as a practical course.⁶¹

The school board's insistence that the school closed due to practicality rather than as a response to the Mexican American community's demands, frames the desegregation decision as emanating from white elites' interests and "rational" economics. The official statement serves to erase the labors of Rey, the support of Fernanda Cruz, and by extension, the activism of the Mexican American community.

The public erasure of the desegregation effort reframes a potentially incendiary story about the Mexican American community's resistance to the racial status quo into a simple economically "rational" decision. The article's framing as a "practical course" further reifies the school board's power as their decision from above obscured the grassroots labor of the Mexican American community. By erasing the true motive for desegregation, it sanitizes the racial politics of the school. In framing the school's closure

⁶⁰ "Bryn Mawr School to Be Sold," *Redlands Daily Facts*, May 2, 1944.

⁶¹ "Bryn Mawr School to Be Sold."

as economic, the Bryn Mawr School is simply another “special school” that has been quietly closed after it outlived its usefulness. The quiet closure of a segregated school is a familiar narrative in San Bernardino County and is a natural result of the ideology of Benevolent Americanization implemented across the county. The focus on a unifying ideology of segregation rather than hard and fast *de jure* rules allowed for systems of segregation that could fit the need of employers without being explicitly codified into law. Benevolent Americanization relied on maternalism, and Rey was able to manipulate that maternalism for their own purposes.

While Rey, Cruz, and Davis successfully mobilized their respectability and contributed to the closure of the Bryn Mawr School, they did not have the power to write the public record of events. Instead, school board documentation and the English language press, both controlled by the citrus elite, had the power to manipulate the narrative and erase these women from “official” historical records. Rey’s bold confrontation segregation, Cruz’s support of the movement and her assistance in the subsequent integration of the Mission District, and Davis’ successful bid for school board were pushed out of the public sphere and forgotten by many. However, both Rey and Cruz kept their histories alive, Cruz through her many oral histories and newspaper interviews, and Rey by maintaining the story in her family, and in the *I Remember Bryn Mawr* documentary. In their rich stories, the history of Bryn Mawr School and importantly, its students, did not disappear after desegregation.



*Figure 34: Rey standing in front of the Bryn Mawr School building, ca 1960. By this time the school had been turned into a church and then left empty until the 2000s.
(Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society, Coyazo Collection)*

Fraught Integration

The transition from Bryn Mawr School to Mission School was not a painless process for students. While Fernanda Cruz assisted with integration, many young pupils had to face racism head-on in their first years at the newly integrated Mission School. In 1942, as Cruz began teaching at Mission, two of Rey's daughters attended Mission in

addition to Don Davis, Ruth Davis's youngest son. What emerged were contrasting experiences amongst the newly integrated pupils. Younger students, especially those taught by Cruz were able to adapt to the new environment more painlessly, while older students who were placed in mostly white classrooms were painfully aware of the everyday discrimination and microaggressions they faced at school. Their memories, preserved through oral history telling, vividly recall their pain and frustration with an acute awareness of racial expectations.

The Bryn Mawr Schoolhouse had always been at the center of the community, just a short walk from students' front yards to the schoolyard. Although the Mission School would be considered "close by" by modern standards at a little over a mile away, the new school felt far for 1st and Juanita Street residents. The children also needed to traverse the busy streets of Barton Road, a major thoroughfare, and California Street. At first, the district did not provide busing services for these students, and they instead trekked through the orange groves to make their way to school. Bryn Mawr resident Fred Ramos remembers that "When we did get a bus, it was the oldest school bus in the district."⁶² To add insult to injury, the new bus would not drive the students to their neighborhood, instead, it deposited students on the corner of California Street, half a mile from the heart of Bryn Mawr.⁶³ Fred Ramos also recalls the many insults aimed at the new students' hygiene. In addition to racial slurs, the students had to endure other taunts. Ramos remembers the bullies stating "Wash your hands. How come you are brown?" and

⁶² Lopez, C.L., "Segregation Ended Here," *Redlands Daily Facts*, July 28, 2005.

⁶³ Ramos et al., Group Bryn Mawr Oral History.

“You Mexican kids go back to where you came from.”⁶⁴ Taunts wielded by white students reflected racial attitudes that viewed Mexican Americans as harbingers of disease and equated the community’s poverty with inherent contamination.



Figure 35: Fernanda Cruz front and center in a Mission School Staff photo form 1945.

(Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society)

Although Mission School was integrated on paper, racial discrimination and prejudice remained pervasive. Ramos’s remembrances emphasize Mission School’s focus on Americanization, “When we went to the Mission School, they would tell us, ‘You are in America now and you are an American now.’”⁶⁵ While Mexican and Mexican

⁶⁴ Lopez, C.L., “Segregation Ended Here.”

⁶⁵ Lopez, C.L.

American students were allowed to attend the school they were viewed as “foreigners,” who had to be transformed to fit into what was considered white space. Because Mexican students had been racialized as perpetually “foreign” (thus justifying their place in a segregated school) their presence at the Mission School forced these students to carry the burden of becoming “American,” as Ramos notes. These young students were forced to prove their worthiness even though the majority of them were U.S. citizens. Ambri Rodriguez remembers that “My first day in Mission School, the teacher put me next to my cousin who spoke English, so I could learn the language, too.”⁶⁶ More acculturated students were held up as role models, and the command of the English language was of particular importance. Often, students who spoke Spanish endured corporal punishment and shame, and some had their mouths “washed” with soap.

Although Cruz attempted to soothe the transition, once students were distributed amongst other teachers, many resorted to the aforementioned tactics. Cruz remembers confronting teachers who would isolate Spanish-speaking students as a method of shaming them and punishing their behavior. She intervened when she could, asking the teachers, “What’s wrong with you? You have to let them communicate in the language they can communicate.”⁶⁷ Cruz intimately knew the pain Mexican students were experiencing, and she attempted to use her voice and authority as a teacher to prevent students from feeling alienated by language barriers. She still recalled the misery of being unable to understand her teacher and being reprimanded for trying to communicate in the

⁶⁶ Lopez, C.L.

⁶⁷ Lopez, C.L.

language she knew.⁶⁸ Despite her efforts, one of the legacies of the Bryn Mawr School and the messy process of desegregation is that many of these students lost their language skills in the devastating pursuit of complete Americanization.

A flashpoint of racial tension occurred during the first month of integration. As if to “prove” the white students’ and teachers’ perceptions of the Mexican community’s propensity for spreading disease, the new Mexican students were accused of being the source of a lice outbreak. Fred Ramos, in fourth grade at Mission School in 1943 recalls the event:

On the first month that we were there they gathered all the Latino, Mexican people, boys and girls in the hallway at the far end of the main building, and they told us that we were going to be sent home because we had lice. They did not send the white people home, only us. And I remember coming home and all our kids had our heads shaved...and we stayed here for two weeks until they allowed us back to Mission School. But they did not send the white kids home. And after we got there the nurse inspected everybody, but they noticed, and I remember they put Kerosene in our heads, and yet we found out that it was the white people who gave us the lice, but they blamed the Mexican people.⁶⁹

Ramos remembers the lice outbreak with intense clarity. In our interview, he relayed his story of injustice bitterly, situating it in the larger context of racial injustice and discrimination. Central to his memory is the theme of separation, that the Mexican people were cordoned off from the rest of the school and that they were prohibited from setting foot in school. The students were made to feel like a separate, second-class group of students, as bearers of contagion, even as children they knew they were being judged by their skin. The childhood experience of discrimination is one of many that informs

⁶⁸ Fernanda Cruz, *All About Me: Autobiography of Nanda Cruz*, 3.

⁶⁹ Ramos et al., Group Bryn Mawr Oral History.

Ramos' awareness of how others perceived him and his fellow community members. His awareness of discrimination would later inform his own activism within the Bryn Mawr community.

Amongst the white students and parents, the lice incident re-entrenched racialized assumptions about Mexican people, as a result, the lice outbreak broke up the initial alliance which had helped desegregate the school. When I interviewed Ruth T. Davis's son, Don Davis, he testified that he did not remember integration occurring at Mission School. He reasoned it was because he was only in third grade when it occurred. However, he did clearly remember the lice incident. He recalls that; "you may not want to repeat this but, my mother took me out of Mission School because I had lice in my hair, it really upset her and I had to go through all the treatments to get rid of it and then she put me up in McKinley school."⁷⁰ When the lice outbreak occurred, even though Ruth Davis had supported integration, she decided to take her child out of the integrated environment and place him in an all-white school. Her decision to remove her son after the racialized public health incident at Mission School illustrates the limits of integration and the precarity of white alliances in the struggle for equal rights.

While Don Davis was removed from school, the Mexican students desired a return to what they knew. As a result of integration frictions, Fred Ramos remembers that he yearned for a return to Bryn Mawr School with Mrs. Cruz, his teacher for first and second grade. Ramos remembers that as a child, "I was hoping that, Mrs. Rey would send

⁷⁰ Davis and Davis, Interview Regarding Ruth Davis.

us back to Bryn Mawr School because we had more freedom to speak, not only English but Spanish, which was not allowed at Mission School.”⁷¹ The traumatic environment of integration colored many students’ experiences; however, by attending Mission School, the Mexican American students had greater opportunities for higher education. For some, like Ramos, it allowed for the ability to get jobs outside of the citrus industry.

School registers from the 1943-1944 and 1945-1946 school years indicate how integration unfolded. At Mission School, Cruz, as a Mexican teacher who knew her students well, attempted to aid in their transition. Her class was comprised of Mexican and Mexican American children most from the Bryn Mawr community. Her classroom roster includes 35 students, all from the Mexican American community of Bryn Mawr, evident through the children’s surnames, as well as the students’ addresses on 1st and Juanita Streets. The children are a mix of ages; their birth years range from 1934 to 1938. Her students include Frances Rey, Rafaela Rey’s daughter, and Carmen Landeros, the daughter of Danny Landeros (Rafaela Rey’s brother). In Cruz’s “Daily Program of Class Activities,” she lists a variety of educational activities, including social studies, correlated reading, music, and language arts. The subjects taught at Mission School were a far cry from the types of vocational education often available to Mexican pupils.

Through an analysis of the school registers, it is clear that Cruz did not allow for the permanent establishment of separate Mexican classes like she experienced at her time in Azusa. While her class was initially comprised only of Mexican students, Cruz’s

⁷¹ Ramos et al., Group Bryn Mawr Oral History.

enrollment notes from her 1943-1944 class indicate that she actively promoted her students to first, second, and even third-grade integrated classrooms. Throughout the year Cruz transferred her students out of her classroom, most students left in April of 1944 to various first and second-grade classrooms, and a group of older students was moved to second grade as early as November of 1943. Sixteen days after her daughter's transfer to Margaret Leonard's second and third-grade class, Rafaela Rey visited the class to check on her daughter and niece. The next year both Frances Rey and Carmen Landeros were promoted to fourth grade. Cruz's notes about promotions also indicate that her classroom was set up to prepare or "catch" up Mexican students before they were placed in integrated classrooms. Cruz functioned as a mediator of integration by preparing students and softening their transition.

Oral histories shed light on the varying student experiences during integration. During interviews with Arthur "Tudy" Hernandez and Fred Ramos, they have different memories of Mission School. Hernandez entered school at Mission and did not attend Bryn Mawr, while Ramos spent first and second grade at Bryn Mawr then transferred to Mission. Hernandez does not recall the same racial taunts and discrimination that Ramos does.⁷² Hernandez, unlike Ramos, did not have a benchmark to compare his experience; further, he was placed in Mrs. Cruz's class along with community members and family members that he knew. On the other hand, Ramos was promoted directly to fourth grade,

⁷² Ramos et al. Statements by Arthur Hernandez and Fred Ramos.

bypassing third grade, and Mrs. Cruz's class.⁷³ He was placed in Beth Pancoast's majority white classroom and did not have the same support as the other Bryn Mawr students.

The ledgers from 1945-1946 illustrate the diffusion of Mexican American students throughout the school. Cruz's roster no longer consists of only Mexican American students. It seems, at least on paper, that integration was complete. In the "History of the Mission School District" compiled in 1994 there is a reference to integration through the recollection of Lucy Siegrist a teacher at Mission School, "Lucy was also very impressed with Fernanda (Nanda) Cruz who came to Mission School from the old school at Bryn Mawr. Nanda had all the little Mexican children who couldn't speak English speaking it in no time."⁷⁴ It seems that Mexican students, with the right teaching, could learn English. They were clearly not as hopeless as Americanization experts wanted to believe and were not in need of "special schools."

⁷³ Pancoast, Beth, "State School Register for Public Elementary Schools for the School Year Beginning July 1, 1943 and Ending June 30, 1944" (Mission Elementary School, June 16, 1944), Redlands Unified School District.

⁷⁴ Kathryn C Beattie, "History of the Mission School District," April 27, 1994, 979.495, San Bernardino County Historical Archives.



Figure 36: Cruz with her first and second-grade class in 1945. The racial mix of students indicates many of the Bryn Mawr School pupils had advanced to higher grades.

(Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society Digital Archive, Richard Cruz Collection)

Conclusion: Claiming Story and Space

The Bryn Mawr School building had been a long-standing community space for the Mexican residents of the Juanita and 1st Street neighborhoods despite it being a site of state and local white control. While the building was a site of Americanization it was also the place where nearly all of the residents had gone to school and played with each other during recess, forming the bonds of friendship and camaraderie. The building was also centrally located right on Barton Road and in between the two neighborhoods. Dances

and carnivals put on by the Bryn Mawr Mexican PTA served as crucial events bringing the community together in celebration and merriment.

Upon the closing of the Bryn Mawr School in 1943, the schoolhouse was put up



*Figure 37: The Bryn Mawr School turned Church was a gathering place for the community. The youth of the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church in Bryn Mawr posed in this photo from the 1940s. Father Peter Barron, in vestments to the right of the youth, led the congregation. Fred Ramos, Historical Commissioner, is in the back row, third from the right.
(Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society Digital Archive, part of the Nellie Rodriguez collection)*

for sale. Catholic pastor, Father Michael O'Day, bid on the abandoned schoolhouse and secured the building for \$6,000 under the Diocese of San Diego.⁷⁵ Much of the Bryn Mawr Mexican community was Catholic, and while St. Mary's church was nearby in Redlands, Bryn Mawr did not have its own place of worship. Up until the purchase of the

⁷⁵ Danny Landeros and Frank Coyazo, *I Remember Bryn Mawr*.

schoolhouse, priests would simply travel to Bryn Mawr to celebrate mass and perform marriage ceremonies. Mass was first celebrated at the Bryn Mawr Schoolhouse, now the Sacred Heart Church, on May 6, 1944.

As a church, the school building saw marriages, funerals, first communions, singing, and community Jamaicas. The building became a space where all could gather throughout the week but especially on Sundays for Mass. Fred Ramos, then attending Mission School, was a proud member of the choir and attended service every Sunday. The school had a new life in which vestiges of educational control and segregation were replaced with expressions of religious joy and community. By 1950 it became apparent that the community had outgrown the small building. A new church, Saint Joseph the Worker, was built in Loma Linda in 1959. The Bryn Mawr School building would remain closed until the 2000s.

The Bryn Mawr School desegregation process is a unique story brought about by an unlikely alliance of three women. As Ruíz states, “effective political and community action requires the intertwining of individual subjectivities within collective goals. Claiming public space can involve fragile alliances and enduring symbols, rooted in material realities and ethereal vision.”⁷⁶ The coalition between Rey, Cruz, and Davis was indeed fragile, as it brought together three women of different ethnicities and different classes in a singular fight against the status quo. The lack of documentation about the event and the relative silence regarding the role these women played in the politics of

⁷⁶ Ruíz, *From out of the Shadows*, 127–28.

desegregation has resulted in the erasure not just of individuals and a community, but of larger historical trends. These archival silences can only be filled in through oral histories and community based archives which take advantage of the rich historical resources which exist in the community.

Although the closure of the Bryn Mawr School was not framed as a desegregation struggle in the official newspaper report, the result was the same. Due to the perseverance and vision of Rey, Cruz, alongside a short-fated alliance with Davis, Mexican and Mexican American students moved to Mission School to be taught alongside their white peers. The efforts of these women are some of the earliest in the region and paved the way for later civil rights efforts. Rey and Cruz were forerunners in desegregation and civil rights, finding creative ways and partnerships to right an injustice in their community. As mothers, community members, and activists they galvanized their community, utilized their right to vote, and spoke up for the rights of themselves and their children.

Rafaela Rey lent her support to break down segregation in other places. She advocated for and supported the 1944 case *Ignacio Lopez v Seccombe* that integrated public spaces in the city of San Bernardino. The success of the Lopez case was later used to support the 1947 *Mendez v Westminster* case, which desegregated California schools for Mexican children. Davis soon divorced her husband and moved out of Bryn Mawr to open her own business, the Redlands Wayside Gardens and Florist. Cruz later became a school administrator and got her Master's in Education from the University of

Redlands.⁷⁷ Cruz served as a teacher supervisor and curriculum coordinator in San Bernardino County. As Ernest García, professor emeritus at California State University, San Bernardino remembers of his and Cruz's work, "we had an opportunity to influence and develop the school curriculum in mathematics, science and Spanish instruction."⁷⁸ Cruz took the place of Americanization administrators and changed the course of schooling in the county. Later, in the 1960s, during the state-wide movement to promote diversity and integration Cruz became one of the few female members of the Mexican-American Educators Coordinating Council- Southern Section.⁷⁹

Despite Rey and Cruz's efforts, until now their actions were largely hidden from public view due to local and historiographical patterns of erasure. I do not think that the story of Rey and Cruz is singular. If the literature can reorient its gaze beyond litigation and onto previously ignored female activists, I predict that more stories, movements, and activists will emerge, significantly complicating the way we understand desegregation processes in California. Further, by studying activists operating outside the courts we can more fully assess the messy experience of integration, which is often overlooked. In many ways, researching outside the courts is far more laborious. Research must incorporate community-based methodologies like oral history and post-custodial archival collection, as the events leave behind comparatively few sources. By working directly

⁷⁷ Fernanda C Cruz, "A Survey of the Job Opportunities for Mexican-Americans in the Field of Public School Education in San Bernardino County for the Years 1942-1962" (1962).

⁷⁸ Tyler, Betty, "Master Teacher, Latina Pioneer, Dies at Age 92," *Redlands Daily Facts*, February 7, 2007.

⁷⁹ Salli Ramirez, "Minutes of the Meeting of the Mexican-American Educators Coordinating Council-Southern Section," June 4, 1966, F3752:3022, California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento California.

with the families of these women, interrogating the archive, creating a supplemental archive, and shifting my focus away from litigation, I uncover and celebrate alternate forms of resistance. By shedding light on these women, who networked, raised consciousness, and acted as spokespersons for their community, I seek to provide others with the tools to bring other ignored actors to center stage.

CONCLUSION: Citrus and Beyond
The Continued Struggle of Bryn Mawr Residents

In 1948, the citrus groves in the San Bernardino Valley froze over. While citrus fantasy advertising like the National Orange Show attempted to promote the Inland Empire as a “Mid-Winter Destination” of mild weather and climate, cold snaps and snowfall posed a rare but devastating threat to the citrus industry. In temperatures at or below 28 degrees Fahrenheit the oranges’ juice freezes, ruining the taste and texture of oranges and making the crop unsellable. In the winter of 1948, acres of orange groves in Bryn Mawr and beyond were covered in a blanket of snow. Growers lost 5,000 boxes of fruit due to frost and snow damage. Grower losses were transferred to the already precarious Mexican and Mexican American packers and pickers resulting in the loss of wages and even jobs.

On October 17, 1951, Bishop Buddy of the San Diego Catholic Diocese dedicated a statue, a small likeness of the Virgin Mary holding an orange at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Bryn Mawr which served the Mexican community. Revered as “Our Lady of the Citrus,” she watched over the citrus crop from her shrine, fundraised and built by Mexican and Mexican American Bryn Mawr residents from donations big and small.⁸⁰ The shrine was located at what was formerly the Bryn Mawr Mexican School, which in 1944 had been turned into the Bryn Mawr Sacred Heart Church. The parishioners led by Father William J. Cooney, called for Mary’s intercession to prevent

⁸⁰ For more information about “Our Lady of the Citrus” see the report compiled and written by Fred Ramos. Fred Ramos, “The History of ‘Our Lady of Citrus,’” n.d., A.K. Smiley Public Library.

any future freezes like the 1948 winter storm. Resident Emer Ditchfield wrote a poem commemorating the statue's unveiling, quoted below in part:

Austere and tender
Our Lady of the Citrus stands
Her slender
Hands
Over the globes of fruit
Peacefully folded⁸¹

It has been said that since the dedication, citrus growers have never lost a crop due to freezing.

However, while the hands of Our Lady of the Citrus may have protected fruit from freezes, larger changes were in motion during the postwar era that would send the entire industry into a downward spiral. The citrus industry's decline was brought about by a myriad of factors such as demands for suburban housing, increased availability of industrial defense jobs, the decline of heritage groves, red scale insect infection, drought, and the rise of Florida and Texas' citrus industries. The country town social system faltered as key citrus industry figures passed away, such as Bryn Mawr grower, landowner, and packinghouse owner Allen Break; school board member and manager of Redlands Cooperative Fruit Association Walter Hentschke; and Chamber of Commerce head A.E. Isham. At the same time, packinghouses mysteriously burnt to the ground.⁸² Prominent packinghouses like Highland Mutual Groves ended operation, while local houses like the Bryn Mawr Fruit Growers Association merged with larger corporations

⁸¹ Ramos.

⁸² Most likely, the cause of the fires were arson or insurance fraud. "Blow Taps for Another Packing House," *Redlands Daily Facts*, March 2, 1979, sec. B-8.

like Orangedale before they also folded.⁸³ In 1967, the Redlands Junction railroad station, so crucial to the citrus industry and Bryn Mawr's connections to the rest of the Inland Empire also went up in flames.⁸⁴

As early as 1972, newspaper headlines predicted Bryn Mawr's demise announcing: "Bryn Mawr says farewell to the good old days," "Trains don't even toot in Bryn Mawr anymore," "Old Bryn Mawr not as busy as it used to be," "Bryn Mawr – now long past its heyday." *Redlands Daily Facts* and *The San Bernardino County Sun* argued that Bryn Mawr was teetering on the edge of disappearance due to the collapse of the citrus industry. Marking the closing of the last citrus industrial business in Bryn Mawr, Jack Clay's citrus pest control warehouse, *Redlands Daily Facts* community writer Erwin Hein claimed "Today, with its last payroll gone and foxtail sprouting along Main street, Bryn Mawr is the place for real bargains in bucolic bliss. It is not yet a ghost town – not with some 300 dwellers still clinging to First and Juanita streets – but the remaining life is strictly domestic."⁸⁵ With "no sign of trade left," all Hein can see is inescapable decline.⁸⁶ Bryn Mawr was created out of the idyllic imaginings of modern rural industrialization, and to Hein, without the presence of industry, Bryn Mawr as a citrus country town could no longer exist. Bryn Mawr is presented as an eerie specter, a fading memory of industrial rural citrus fantasy, a ghost of a once glorious past.

⁸³ "As Walter J. Seavey remembers, the huge packing establishment of the Bryn Mawr Fruit Growers shut down in 1958, and its economy-minded members merged with the Redlands Orangedale Groves. The property was sold to the Bryn Mawr-Coachella Valley Gowers, then to Jack Wiley, but for a couple of years the cavernous old plant has been silent." Erwin Hein, "Wes Break Remembers Bryn Mawr When....," *The Redlands Daily Facts*, December 13, 1972, Newspapers.com.

⁸⁴ Hein.

⁸⁵ Hein, "Bryn Mawr Says Farewell to the Good Old Days."

⁸⁶ Hein.

Completed in 1973, the Barton overpass elevated Barton Road, Bryn Mawr's main thoroughfare above the railroad. In order to construct the overpass, downtown Bryn Mawr was literally buried and paved over. As Hein recounts "This is the mountainous new highway that bends through the heart of Bryn Mawr, avoiding the deserted packinghouse, but smothering everything on the north flank of the old Barton road."⁸⁷ In Hein's description, the highway seems to have sucked out the vivacity of the town; Bryn Mawr is "smothered," and "deserted," cowering under the shadow of the "mountainous" overpass. At the same moment that memories are buried, it seems that opportunities for new ones are stifled as well, "The new Barton road carries its traffic safely and swiftly – 20 feet above the trains – and there's one less reason for pausing in Bryn Mawr."⁸⁸ The overpass became a visual symbol of Bryn Mawr's irrelevance and near literal disappearance from the motorists' eye.

Decline seemed to re-entrench the fantasy of the citrus industry. Newspaper writers like Erwin Hein, Howard A. Ellis, and Fred Holladay used Bryn Mawr's "demise" to memorialize a boosteristic history of the citrus industry, nostalgically looking towards citrus grove owners as heroes of a more glorious past. According to Fred Holladay in his article "Bryn Mawr: Anyone who was anyone lived there," "The names of residents living there read like a "Who's Who" of the founding fathers of San Bernardino. They included Anson and Louis Van Leuven; James A. Cole; Henry M. Willis; Captain Nathaniel Pishon and Horace M. Frink, all of whom settled there before

⁸⁷ Erwin Hein, "Trains Don't Even Toot in Bryn Mawr Anymore," *The Redlands Daily Facts*, December 23, 1972, Newspapers.com.

⁸⁸ Hein.

1861.”⁸⁹ Holladay’s “fathers” are all white settlers who transitioned from “pioneers” and California’s first American settlers to wealthy grove owners. Profiles on citrus elites like Wesley Break, Bernice Smith, and Walter J. Seavey told of the height of citrus production from their nostalgic perspectives.⁹⁰ Jack Clay, one of the last holdouts of the citrus industry described Bryn Mawr as “a combination of “lovely green hills,” citrus groves, and “fine little homes and finer big homes. The grove owners lived in the big ones, each surrounded by about 10 acres, and there used to be four packinghouses employing Bryn Mawr people.”⁹¹ In the landscape Clay paints, nature’s beauty is present, signs of the citrus industry are present (groves and 4 packinghouses), and so is the wealth brought forth from the industry in the form of “finer big homes,” but noticeably absent is the Mexican American community. Together these nostalgic narratives paved over the reality of struggle and discrimination faced by Mexican and Mexican American residents.

“Bryn Mawr,” as it was understood by citrus country town elites and local newspapers, now only existed in the past. This narrative of disappearance continued to erase Mexican residents, conveniently ignoring the robust and continued presence of the Mexican American community in Bryn Mawr. While Hein stated that Bryn Mawr was nearly a ghost town, Hein concedes that there were “300 dwellers still clinging to 1st and Juanita streets.”⁹² These were the Mexican American residents of Bryn Mawr. The same

⁸⁹ Fred Holladay, “Bryn Mawr: Anyone Who Was Anyone Lived There,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, September 28, 1986.

⁹⁰ Hein, “Wes Break Remembers Bryn Mawr When....”; Hein, “Barton Road Fill Buries Historic Bryn Mawr Sites”; Hein, “Trains Don’t Even Toot in Bryn Mawr Anymore.”

⁹¹ Howard A. Ellis, “Bryn Mawr - Now Long Past Its Heyday,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, September 2, 1984.

⁹² Hein, “Bryn Mawr Says Farewell to the Good Old Days.”

families who arrived in Bryn Mawr at the turn of the twentieth century continued to live on 1st, Juanita, Adella, and Anita Streets. As the citrus colony's economic, social, political, and cultural structure crumbled, these systems, which reproduced whiteness and furthered exploitation fell away. What was left was the close-knit Mexican neighborhood created and fed by familial and cultural bonds rather than the bonds of finances and industry. While weakened by the loss of job opportunities and other economic pressures throughout the region, the Mexican community dwindled but survived. The citrus country town wasted away but what was left was the Mexican neighborhood and community. Mexican residents became Bryn Mawr and its legacy, and they worked to preserve it as the city of Loma Linda threatened annexation.

In my dissertation, I have traced the history of an often-overlooked region that has much to teach us about the history of California rurality, Progressive education, Americanization, Mexican community building, labor resistance, desegregation organizing, and much more. Analyzing the history of Bryn Mawr up to the 1950s sets the groundwork for future studies on post-war upheavals in the region. These include an analysis of the community's mobilization of anti-poverty programs during the 1960s Johnson Administration, the rise of local bilingual television in an era of intercultural unity, grassroots resistance to annexation and development (1970s-2000), and current calls for environmental justice in light of invasive extractive logistics industry. Ending at the postwar era is advantageous as it allows me to assess the unique landscape of rural Inland Southern California. Assessing this crystallization of rural life brings to the forefront historical patterns that have previously remained in the shadows. Life in Bryn

Mawr and other small citrus country towns in the San Bernardino Valley produced a unique set of circumstances and trends such as Mexican subdivision creation, early segregated Mexican schools, foreign rurality, Benevolent Americanization, claims for local citizenship based on residency, Mexican women's social power, and non-litigative grassroots desegregation movements.

Through the visual analysis of spectacle found at the National Orange Show, I illustrate how the various towns were imagined as the idyllic configuration of modern rural industrialization mixing rural natural bounty with industrial and technological amenities. Imagined as a space for "a better class" of white industrious farmers, small Inland Empire townsites grew into what I call citrus country towns, upheld by a strict social system in which a small, interrelated group of citrus agribusiness leaders sought to control nearly all aspects of life. Despite grower fantasies and idealizations of their landscape, and their place within it, the citrus industry relied on exploitative racial capitalism. While a multiracial community of Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican workers called Bryn Mawr home, anti-Asian exclusion curbed further immigration and therefore the labor supply of Chinese and Japanese workers. Growers felt the loss of Asian labor and throughout the heyday of the citrus industry worked diligently to maintain their, now crucial, Mexican labor source.

The emerging racialized landscape in the Inland Empire changed the way educators and country town elites approached rural space. Through teacher experiences in rural schools, it became clear to local educators and administrators within the state department of education, that rural space was not white. California and especially the

Inland Empire faced the constructed “problem” of foreign rurality. Within country towns, growers sought to soothe white anxieties about the presence of Mexican laborers.

Growers created segregated subdivisions, what I call Mexican subdivisions, to corral and control laborers. Growers exhibited control through policing and the press, and administrators such as Grace C. Stanley worked within education to further Benevolent Americanization and insist upon teachers’ abilities to mold Mexican students into ideal future laborers.

The Mexican community mounted continual resistance to their exclusion and practices of discrimination. While Mexican subdivisions were spaces of white control, they were not company towns. Therefore, starting in the late 1920s and increasing in the 1930s, many Mexican and Mexican American residents in Bryn Mawr owned their homes and the land they sat on. Together many residents attempted to mobilize their residency through labor petitions and strikes to insist on their local citizenship and increased labor rights. Mexican Americans leveraged more than residency. I use the example of Rafaela Landeros Rey and Fernanda Cruz to illustrate how women were able to navigate gendered expectations and mobilize the respectability they gained as women and mothers to traverse white space and gain respectability in the white citrus country town. By manipulating aspects of the country town social system, these women were able to use their positions to desegregate and integrate the Mission School District without litigation.

While studying Bryn Mawr illuminates diverse trends such as homeownership, mobilization of residency, and foreign rurality, as well as previously unrecognized

histories including the National Orange Show, Grace C. Stanley's education philosophies, and non-litigative desegregation by Rey and Cruz, I do not argue that Bryn Mawr is unique. Instead, I am proposing that scholarly biases towards urban and metropolitan areas tended to relegate the history of smaller rural regions as unimportant. Often histories of spaces such as Bryn Mawr are ignored by scholars and written off as purely the realm of "local history;" as a result, crucial trends and patterns are overlooked. As more studies of rural space in Inland Southern California emerge, I predict that similar patterns will manifest. It is also my hope that more overlooked historical actors like Grace Stanley, Rafaela Landeros Rey, Fernanda Cruz, and Elizabeth Keppie will step into the spotlight.

This work could not have been completed without significant public and community history endeavors, many of which had been performed by the community years before I was even born. The Bryn Mawr community's grassroots preservation efforts included community reunions, street naming, building preservation, and the preservation of the original code created in 1895. Although the city had paved over the geographical "heart" of Bryn Mawr, the true heart of Bryn Mawr is alive in the memories of the community.

Danny Landeros, as the chairman of Los Amigos de Bryn Mawr, planned a community reunion at Sylvan Park in Redlands in August 1978. The event called "I Remember Bryn Mawr" brought together current residents and past residents to reminisce about their home and the citrus past. On the day of the event, about 1,000 community members attended from all over California. During the event, they shared

stores and photographs, listened to local Mariachi bands, and ate together as in times past. This event was a reaction to Loma Linda's encroachment, as Landeros states, “We’re worried that Bryn Mawr will pretty soon, not exist anymore because it’s being swallowed up.”⁹³ By assembling together as a community they asserted their existence and their town’s rich history. A young Frank Coyazo videotaped the event and performed informal oral histories with “old-timers” including Danny Landeros and Oddie Martinez. Frank preserved the memories of Bryn Mawr for future generations. This video is a precious archival document that preserves the memories of Bryn Mawr community builders.

While the memories of the “I Remember Bryn Mawr” event are preserved on video, the community has also marked the new suburban landscape with the history of old Bryn Mawr. In an act of attempted reconciliation with the Bryn Mawr community, the city of Loma Linda, which annexed Bryn Mawr, went to Fred Ramos to ask for his input on certain aspects of the new suburban developments the city was built in the Bryn Mawr area. During his time with the historical commission, Ramos has been instrumental in infusing the new neighborhoods with Bryn Mawr history. Ramos did this through street names. In a new housing community, which had been erected near the old Bryn Mawr post office, he named the streets after the Bryn Mawr postmasters. “Lawrence Way” is named after the first postmaster in Bryn Mawr and “Landeros Way” after Cora Landeros, who worked at the post office in the 60s, 70s, and 80s.⁹⁴ In addition, when the

⁹³ Howard A. Ellis, “A Festive Farewell for Bryn Mawr,” *The San Bernardino Sun*, August 17, 1987, Newspapers.com.

⁹⁴ Ramos, Unrecorded Interview. Statement by Frank Coyazo

Loma Linda Credit Union was to be built near the site of the Bryn Mawr/Redlands Junction train station, Ramos insisted that the architecture of the bank mimic that of the old station, and today a picture of the station hangs in the foyer.⁹⁵



Figure 38: Undated photo of a train at the Bryn Mawr/ Redlands Junction Station that hangs in the entrance to the Loma Linda Credit Union.
(Courtesy of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society Digital Archive)

⁹⁵ The image in the foyer is colorized. There is no label accompanying the image in the credit union.

One of the key parts of the community's identity is the Bryn Mawr ZIP code, 92318. This has been the Bryn Mawr ZIP code since 1895, and it is currently what separates Bryn Mawr from Loma Linda. Rosalie Coyazo states that during the process of annexation residents were given a choice, "whether to go to the post office in Loma Linda or use one of the mailboxes on the street.... if we used the mailbox on the street, we would be able to keep the ZIP code. So, I said, let's keep it, I still want to be a part of Bryn Mawr."⁹⁶ This foresight to "preserve this historical place" by maintaining the ZIP code has literally kept Bryn Mawr on the map.⁹⁷ Online maps such as Google Maps utilize postal codes in the creation of their maps. As a result, although Bryn Mawr is no longer an independent town, the name still appears online. As Frank Coyazo states, "if that ZIP code would have disappeared so would have Bryn Mawr."⁹⁸ This unique act of historic preservation has maintained the community's identity and prevented its history and name from disappearing.

The new elementary school in Loma Linda is also keeping the name and legacy of the area alive. In 1993, there was a public vote on the name of a new public school. The new school grounds stand on what used to be Bryn Mawr groves and the school is located on Whittier Avenue, a street named for a prominent packinghouse owner in Bryn Mawr. Many wanted to name the new school after one of the Loma Linda University doctors. Fred Ramos, however, felt the school should pay homage to the legacy of Bryn Mawr. He

⁹⁶ Ramos et al., Group Bryn Mawr Oral History. Statement by Rosalie Coyazo.

⁹⁷ Ramos et al. Statement by Fred Ramos.

⁹⁸ Ramos et al. Statement by Frank Coyazo.

remembers that “When I went to the council meeting in Loma Linda... I called out, I says no. This is the Bryn Mawr area and we call it Bryn Mawr Elementary, and they all laughed at me, but they went ahead and submitted the name.”⁹⁹ Ramos then attended the school board meeting in Redlands and appealed to Hank Mercado, who was the president of the school board. He reminded him, “you were an altar boy, and your brother at the church you have a history in the Bryn Mawr area so you should name the school Bryn Mawr Elementary so what happened, later on, they came to the school board, well they named it Bryn Mawr Elementary.”¹⁰⁰ Today the students attending Bryn Mawr Elementary take pride in being “Bryn Mawr Blue Jays.” When meeting with Fred Ramos and other community members at Bryn Mawr Elementary for a community collection day I organized as a member of the Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society, Ramos had tears in his eyes upon reflecting that the new elementary school would carry on the Bryn Mawr name.

The retelling of Bryn Mawr’s history is one of many acts that prevents what 1970s commentators thought was destined: the disappearance of Bryn Mawr. This dissertation is one more story added to the existing memory of Bryn Mawr asserting Bryn Mawr’s legacy and importance. Fred Ramos, the “unofficial mayor” of Bryn Mawr says it most eloquently, “We have a ZIP code, we have a history, and we have a name. It is not right for them to try and take us over.”¹⁰¹ This statement of resistance echoes with the

⁹⁹ Ramos et al.

¹⁰⁰ Ramos et al.

¹⁰¹ Jennifer M Dobbs, “Small Town, Rich History,” *The San Bernardino Sun*, June 25, 2003, Loma Linda (I), Smiley Library, Redlands.

past patterns of resistance from labor petitions, strikes, and homeownership, to desegregation in the community's ongoing struggle for preserving their rights and their history.

With time comes new struggles, new exploitative systems needing to be broken, and new crises for new generations. At the 1987 "I Remember Bryn Mawr" event, Father Gill of Saint Joseph the Worker, the new Catholic Church serving the Bryn Mawr community, was interviewed by Arnie Kosmatka about Our Lady of the Citrus:

Father Gill: "And since 1952 no frost has ever destroyed the citrus of Loma Linda and Bryn Mawr in its vicinity."

Arnie Kosmatka: "Can you do something about the smog Father?"

Father Gill: (Laughs) "The only thing you can try to do about that is try to talk to the Automobile Department." (Laughs)¹⁰²

It is now 2021, over 130 years since the creation of the Bryn Mawr tract by land prospectors Drew and Crawford. At the very end of Bryn Mawr Avenue, an idling truck spews diesel fumes into the air as the driver rests before entering one of the more than 45 logistical warehouses which have now paved over hundreds of citrus acreage. Between the late 1960s and today, the reigning Orange Empire has morphed into the Empire of Logistics. It has spurred on a new racialized landscape harboring the familiar threats of labor exploitation and environmental hazard where workers are surveilled to ensure they meet their Amazon "pick rate" in the same location where citrus pickers once worked tirelessly for piece-rate wages. Environmental justice struggles are now at the forefront of local resistance with women like Dianne Landeros, Rafaela Rey's niece, fighting for

¹⁰² Danny Landeros and Frank Coyazo, *I Remember Bryn Mawr*.

global and local environmental reform. The history of Bryn Mawr continues to be written, in part because it continues to be remembered.

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